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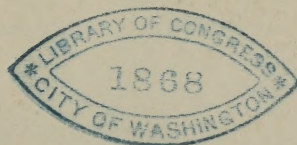
AN ESSAY,

SHOWING THE ESSENTIAL IDENTITY

OF

THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES.

Richard Abbey.



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AN ESSAY

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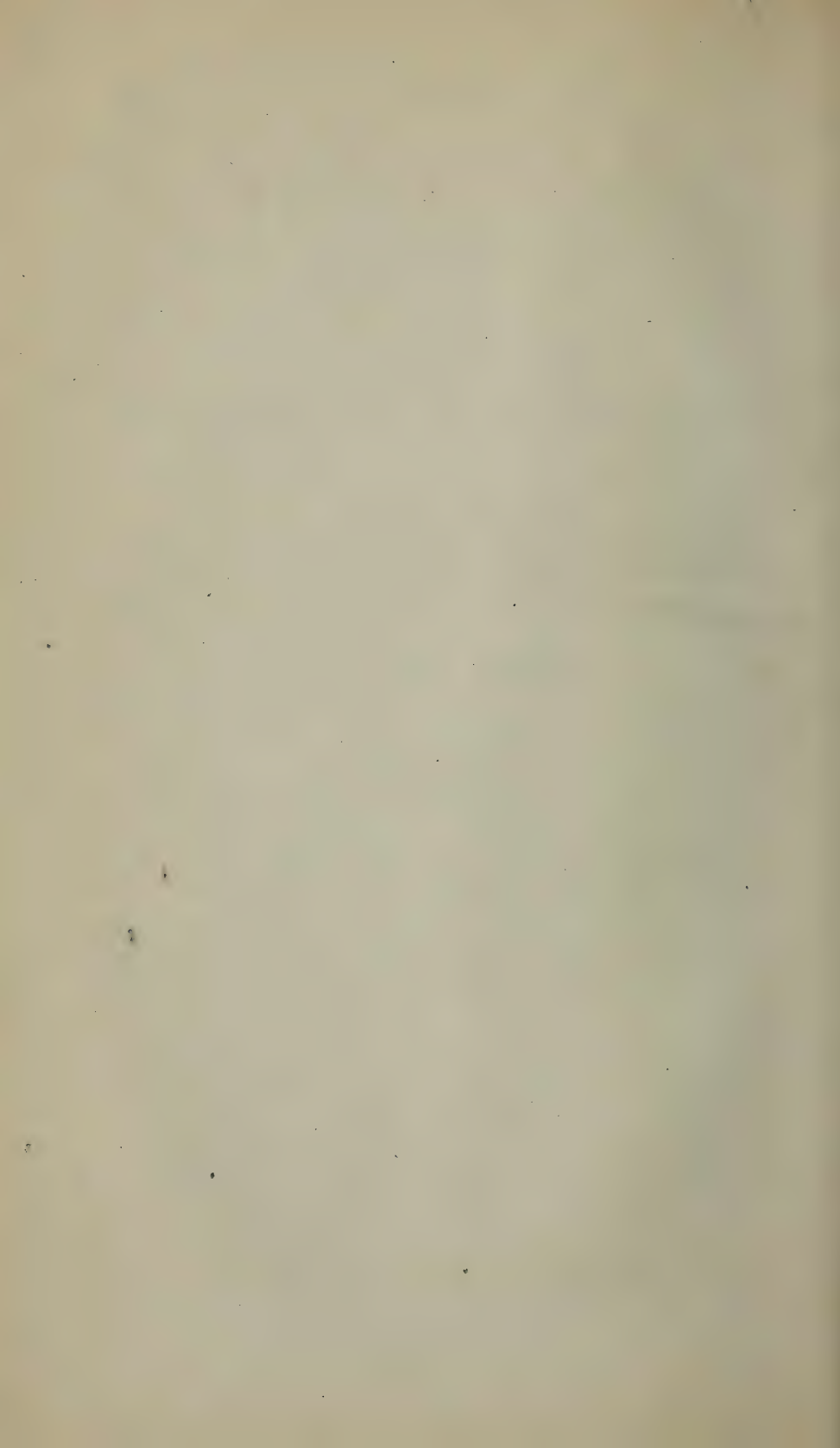
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P R E F A C E.

I HAVE long since desired to correct some of the many very hurtful and untrue teachings which are so abundant in our current literature respecting the Church, and to endeavor to show its easy and natural passage down through the period of the Saviour's advent.

It is remarkable how an error, once set in motion, will pass along from man to man, from generation to generation, acquiring momentum as it goes. A current and familiar phraseology oftentimes covers up an error until it becomes a commonplace or matter of course, when the same thing, *looked into*, would be promptly set aside as an error.

In the following treatise I am compelled to cross the views of far abler and better writers; but I treat those authors with the utmost fairness, courtesy, and respect. I have been greatly profited by them—certainly by their wisdom and true teachings—and I trust, also, even by their errors. But I take no uninspired man upon trust. My

business has been to discriminate between truth and error. I have dealt with the *meaning*, rather than the *words* of authors—that is to say, I have uniformly given to their words the simple, ordinary meaning the common reader would give them. While I have studiously and faithfully shunned every thing like hypercriticism upon their language myself, I have denied the right in their favor, of themselves, to strain their language to make it fit the straight-edge of Scripture and reason. I take them to a court of chancery rather than to a court of law.

Since I began this treatise, I have found these errors graver and far more numerous than I had any knowledge of before. They all lie in the same general channel. My plan at first was, to deal exclusively with quotations from Scripture, make my affirmative arguments, and leave the reader to draw his own inferences as to other authors who might conflict with them. But I could not make it work in that way. I could do justice neither to my readers, to other authors whose views I wished to controvert, nor to myself. And so I concluded to quote from a number of those authors, and oppose them openly. From this I would gladly shrink, but I must deal frankly and plainly, as well as justly and fairly.

The quotations I have made, however, must be regarded as mere samples, picked up here and there almost at

random, with very little selecting. Every one will see they could be easily multiplied, if necessary.

I hope I have a high and becoming regard for learning and authorship. For years I have sat, I trust, profitably, at the feet of wise men, where I have spent many delightful hours. Still, I have, I confess, not cherished a high regard for the selfish theologian who can see nothing in theological discussion but "our Church," and who imagines that an appeal to "standard authors" decides all questions, and elucidates all Scripture and all reasoning. Such a one will think I have undertaken a wonderfully hard task, and will wonder how I will succeed, for that some learned doctors have written differently. He need not be alarmed, at least before the time. He mistakes my undertaking. I ask no favors. I have not entered the list of disputants, nor undertaken to measure arms with the doctors. I am not controverting questions with somebody. I have lived long enough to know that religious controversy is, at least, an unprofitable employment. It tickles the passions and sectarian prejudices of a few thoughtless, brainless friends, when dexterously handled, but seldom convinces the judgment of others. In this essay, at least, all Christians are my friends. I recognize no opponents. If any man can differ with me when I am read, he is quite welcome to do so.

I have undertaken only to point out a number of plain

errors—I might say palpable errors—which have been strangely overlooked; and, supposing me to be right in the matter, every one will say they are errors which must be corrected. I will not be dogmatical, but I will be firm, earnest, decisive.

In current religious thought among Christians, the Old Testament and the New are placed too wide asunder. They are not separated by a straight line, much less by an open space. They blend, mingle, commingle.

There is a common notion that there is a difference—even an antagonism—between the Judaism of the Old Testament and the Christianity of the New, as separate systems of religion; that the latter, by its superior truth and spirituality, triumphed over the former; that the Jews clung with tenacity to their religion of the Old Testament, notwithstanding it was superseded by a better; and that, to this day, they cling to it in hostility to Christianity, which is the religion of the New Testament. Judaism is held to be, in many respects, at least, a false system of religion, and is now lost sight of in the superiority of the gospel. There are two *Dispensations* of religion, it is said—the old and the new—or the Jewish and the Christian. The old was abrogated because it was bad or insufficient, and the new is different and better. The Saviour and his apostles made great changes and a reformation in both the principles

and modes of worship: finding the old dispensation not adapted to mankind, but special in its principles, it was brought to a close, and on its ruins the gospel, suited to all men, was set up. Judaism stood opposed to Christianity, and Christianity made war upon Judaism; and this being a war of truth against error, the gospel succeeded. And so the Jews rejected Christ and his religion. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." They stood in solid phalanx against Christianity, and stand there still. The Jewish religion, which was thus ignored and superseded by Christ, was made up chiefly of forms and ceremonies, and had a *Ceremonial Law*, which Christ abrogated as unnecessary and burdensome. At the time of Christ, the Jews, having so bad a religion, had all, or nearly all, become most abominably corrupt. One writer of no mean repute enumerates *two* who were pious; and another of far higher fame, says they were *all* corrupt.

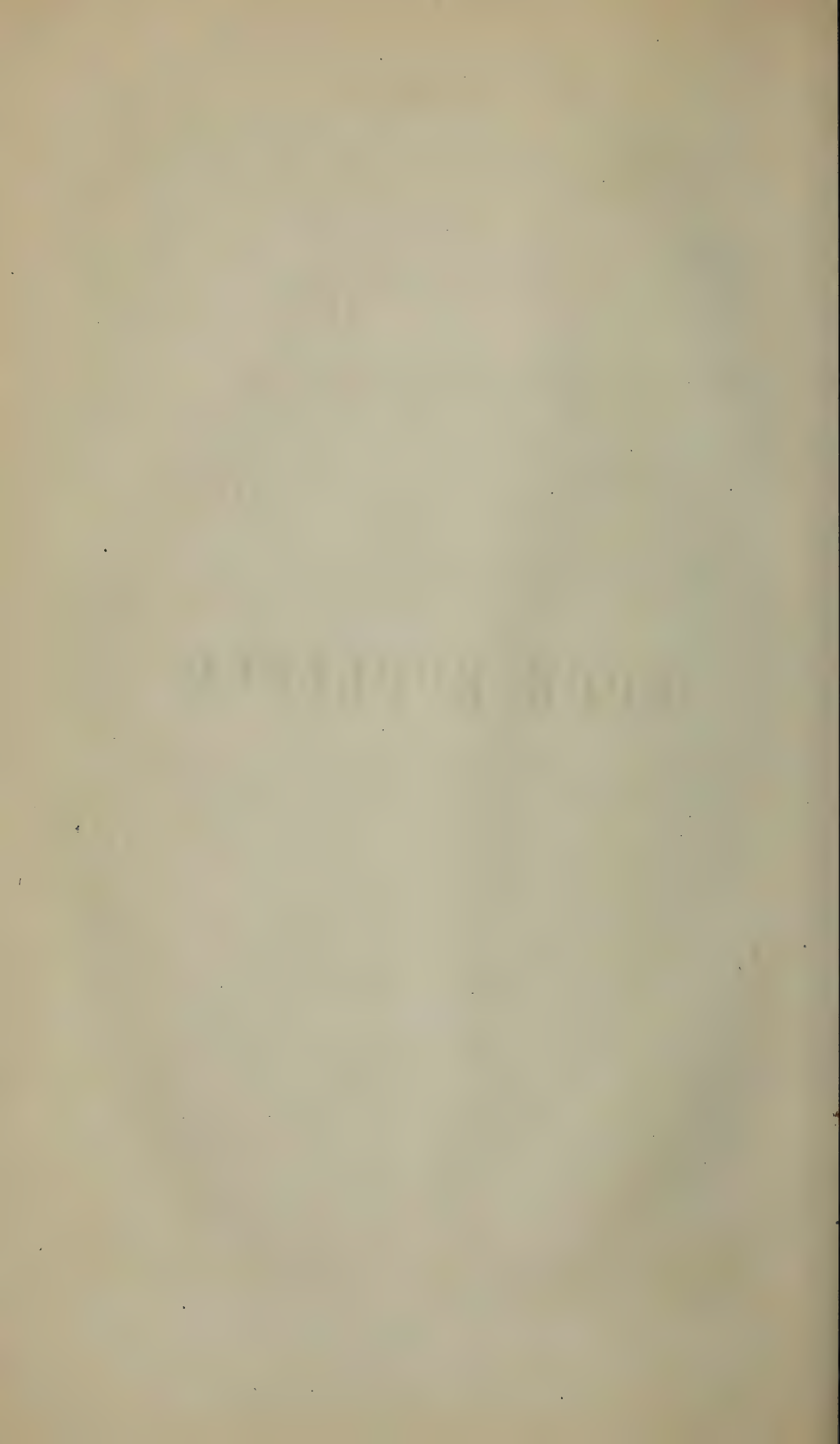
The Christian sacraments, being Christian, and therefore new, of course originated then and there with Christ—a new religion, of course, requiring new sacraments and a new Church.

These are some of the errors I hope to make plain to the reader. They can hardly be believed when once understood. I hope to show the proper, natural identity of Judaism and Christianity; and also, that the Jews,

upon whom, as a race, it has become so fashionable to bestow so much contumely, were—perhaps a full half of them—the most noble, pious, and magnanimous Christians that ever lived; that they were the great friends and propagators of Christianity.

These chapters ought also to show the proper, natural relation between the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and form an introduction to the latter, and prepare the mind for its more profitable perusal. Much of the New Testament books is mysterious to many, and is but poorly understood, because it is looked upon as introducing new principles of religion and ethics.

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CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING RELIGION BEFORE THE FLOOD.

WHATEVER God may have done, in the plenitude of his mercy, in relation to the salvation of men, there is one thing he has not done: he has not, either in whole or in part, changed or disturbed the constitution of man. But in all the variety of times, places, and circumstances in which salvation has been offered to men, the mode of doing so has been most wisely and wonderfully adapted to their constitution and wants, as they were found actually to exist in those various conditions.

Of the antediluvian world we know but very little; and we sometimes almost forget that that period embraced a very considerable portion of the world's history up to the present time. Our chronological knowledge of that period is very defective and uncertain. The question of very ancient chronology is beset with more difficulty and uncertainty than almost any other biblical question. Many of the best scholars have, after years of toil and research,

found themselves puzzled with many questions which did not admit of satisfactory solution. According to some modes of calculation, which look reasonable, the Hebrew text of the Bible places the flood in the year of the world 1656; and by the same modes of calculation the Septuagint places it in 2262, and Josephus in 2256. Various other calculations, based upon the same scriptures, vary still more widely, some making the period almost seven thousand years.

Upon the whole, it is well understood among the learned who have studied this subject, that the difficulties to be encountered in this part of ancient chronology, and indeed for some time after the flood, are so many and so great that no satisfactory conclusion can be reached. The opinions of chronologists are, however, understood mostly to incline to the belief that the antediluvian period is probably about one thousand years longer than the shorter calculations make it.

Now, in this long period, what particular, didactic religious teaching did the world enjoy? We may have some faint idea of what was *needed*, by inquiring what has been needed in this same regard in the last two or three thousand years.

We look into the Scriptures and find that we have three, or perhaps four, expressions on this immediate subject. The account of the flood begins at the 11th verse of the 7th chapter of Genesis. The first religious teaching is in the 15th verse of the 3d chapter, and is a part of the address of Jehovah to the serpent, in these words: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"—referring to the seed of the woman. The next begins with the 3d verse of the 4th chapter, and relates to the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. The third is the 26th verse of the 4th chapter, and sets forth the existence of the Church—that is, a separated

people calling themselves by the name of the Lord, or professing the name, or to be the people of the Lord.

The first of these texts, about the seed, or posterity, of the woman bruising the head of the serpent, is supposed—and no doubt correctly—to refer to the atoning sacrifice of the Saviour, and it is all we have written directly on that subject in the antediluvian Scriptures; while of the entire history, religion, literature, and all of the entire period, we have but six short chapters.

Now, the question is, are we to conclude that the entire sum of religious teaching for mankind, in the period referred to, was confined to these words, or words in some understood language of that equivalent? This would suppose that in all that period the world was left just about totally without any religious teaching whatever. If this was their Bible or their revelation, then were they not without a Bible—that is, without divine religious instruction?

This, it seems to me, would be both unnatural and contrary to the scope and philosophy of Biblical teaching. This brief statement about the head of the serpent and the heel of the woman's posterity, conveys *to us* no very clear and distinct idea about religion and a Saviour. And I do not see how it could convey *to them*—the people of those long, long ages—any thing more definite or satisfactory. After giving to it forty different explanations, they would be left greatly in doubt if it had any prospective religious meaning at all.

I understand the text quite differently. It is the language of an inspired historian, of after ages, giving us some information, in very few words, of *what* God taught the people in those early times. But how he taught it—to what extent it was explained, or how voluminous was the teaching, if done in words or didactic lessons, we are not informed. It is reasonable to suppose, from what Moses

tells us, that the teaching so briefly alluded to by him, might have been ten times more voluminous than the entire volume of Scripture, and might have continued on, explanation upon explanation, for many ages.

At this juncture we are told a Saviour was *promised*, and that faith in the divine veracity, that at a future time he would send us a Saviour, was required of men.

In the *Comprehensive Commentary* we are told that one of the objects continually kept in view throughout the Old Testament is, "to direct men's attention, by the gradual development of the scheme of prophecy, to the *future Messiah*." Not, surely, I think, to "the *future Messiah*," but to the *present Messiah*. Surely there must have been something more than a mere promise, or prophecy of something to be, away in the future. Christ must have been there—there present himself in all his saving power.

I undertake to believe that, absolutely and without qualification, *no man hath seen God at any time*—neither Adam, nor Moses, nor any human person. I suppose that our present mode of existence, if nothing else, would render this absolutely impossible. The nature of man forbids that with his senses he may see, or hear, or otherwise apprehend God in his essential spirituality.

I therefore conclude that if the first pair, or Cain, or the builders at Shinar, or Moses, or the apostles, ever had sensible audience with the Deity, it was with Christ—God in Christ. Indeed, I suppose that God has never manifested himself to men in any other way or mode than in the person of the Son of God.

Nevertheless, it was a part of the redeeming plan that, in the fullness of time—at the best time—Christ would appear in a most peculiar and wonderful manner—even to be born of a woman, and live a human life. This manifestation was pointed forward to from Eden, and all along in the Old

Testament period. But there was not a *future* Messiah, in the sense often understood.

Indeed, I suppose that faith—Bible faith—the faith which is unto salvation—always refers to something in the present, and not to something merely *to be* in the future.

I know of nothing in either reason or revelation to disparage the belief that, in those days, religion was extensively and popularly taught and elaborated by hundreds and thousands of appointed ministers. That they possessed a verbal revelation, written or unwritten, is very certain; and how far it went into details, we have no knowledge.

We are told that the antediluvian people became very wicked; so much so, that God destroyed them therefor with a terrible destruction. Then they must have had more religious instruction than merely that "*the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.*" In after ages we have a whole Bible, and millions of teachers, and yet it is a hard matter to get the people to be religious. How could God hold men responsible for religious conduct without some religious instruction?

And, remember, it is nowhere intimated that there was any sort of restriction or briefness in these teachings. It is by no means *the teachings they received* which is related to us, but *a bare remark of the historian respecting it.* The common notion about an obscure prophecy seems utterly unnatural; and at best it is a mere gratuitous assumption.

We shall see, in subsequent chapters, how patiently laborious it was—so to speak—to instill into the minds of the Israelites, in after ages, the simple rudiments of religion. With all their advantages over the antediluvians, they needed line upon line and precept upon precept, day after day, year after year, and age after age. And yet it was with but slow steps that they advanced in theological knowledge.

In the 4th chapter of Genesis we read that in process of time Cain and Abel brought respectively their offerings to the Lord; and that for some cause, not clearly stated, "the Lord had respect" to the offering of Abel, but not to that of Cain. From the manner in which this subject is introduced, we can but infer that worship was neither a new nor a rare thing. Cain is first spoken of as going through the forms of worship; and from what we subsequently hear of him, we can hardly suppose that he was either an introducer or leader in the worship of the true God. There must have been a well-understood religious system. And this must have been the result of much religious instruction; though it may have been given preternaturally, supernaturally, or miraculously.

In the 26th verse we read that "then men began to call on the name of the Lord;" and among the learned there is some variety of opinion as to its true meaning. One of these explications, and that which I favor is, that in process of time wickedness became so open and notorious that the truly pious began to separate, or dissociate from others, religiously, and so call themselves by a religious name or designation. And this, I think, may be regarded as the formation, in the first instance, of what we now call a Church. It was an open, public withdrawing of religious people to themselves, for religious association, and the open assumption of the name of the Lord.

Whether we read this particular passage right or not, it is certain that at this time there was a well-known religious system among men, and that some were religious and some were not. Acceptable worship was rendered to the Almighty on the one hand, and the opposite of it on the other.

And in the course of time—many centuries, however, after this—we read of one of the most remarkable cases of personal piety in the whole history of religion.

“And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him.” This is wonderfully brief, and wonderfully sublime. It furnishes the highest evidence of antediluvian knowledge of faith in Christ; for there is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved.

And there are a few other glances, briefly set forth in the Bible, at the religious and irreligious state of things before the flood, which go to show that in those ages there must have been a well-settled religious system. Even a brief historic account of it would fill many volumes.

Now, a very important question arises here: *What system of religion did these people have?* Although there is very little said on the subject in the history, and but a very few incidental references made to it in Scripture, yet we are obliged to know that there can be but one system of human religion. All human salvation flows from the atonement of Christ. And surely this was not to the men of Old Testament times a Saviour who would begin to exist away in some future age of the world, and work a sort of *ex post facto*, or retrospective salvation. They believed, as we do, in a present Saviour for themselves.

But how much theological knowledge is necessary to salvation, is another question. Absolutely, I presume that none is necessary. Many are saved without knowing any thing about God or a Saviour. The rule is that each particular person requires such measure of religious knowledge as may be reasonably within his reach. None is within the reach of idiots and infants; but with others, no man can be saved, in the antediluvian or any other age of the world, without as much as he may be reasonably able to reach.

It is not likely that the antediluvians had any thing like a religious literature; but they had other and lesser means of acquiring and teaching their obligations to God. The

early, direct teachings from God were no doubt not at all popular, but were confined to the heads of tribes or families, who themselves became the teachers to those under them. In this way they must have had a very full knowledge of salvation by Christ.

Worship is natural. But to worship intelligibly, in our fallen condition, is most clearly preternatural. For we know enough of ourselves to see, that without supernatural assistance, we could not approach an invisible and spiritual God.

The very fact that Cain's worship was unacceptable, is proof of a well-known religious system. Cain knew better. His offering, like thousands now-a-days, was deistic—Abel's was Christian.

The population of the world at the time of the death of Abel was much greater than is supposed by many. Some estimate it at over thirty thousand, and others at four hundred thousand. The affairs of the world had progressed considerably.

Much has been said about the reasons why the worship of Cain was rejected, and that of Abel accepted. We are told in Hebrews that that of Abel was offered "by faith." No doubt, *in his judgment*, Cain's offering was a very proper sacrifice. It was a deistical attempt to approach God directly, irrespective of a Saviour. The simple truth is apparent—that Cain's worship, in some way, no matter how, excluded Christ as the Saviour. It was therefore deism of some form. And Abel's worship was through Christ—that is, it was Christian.

This offering of sacrifice, it is said, took place "in process of time," or, as many render it, "at the end of days." This was no doubt the Sabbath—the regular Sabbath-worship.

The history tells us almost nothing about the antedilu-

vian people. It mentions only the names of a few kings, governors, or patriarchs, who were chiefs among the people. Enoch was a priest, a king, and a preacher. Noah, it is expressly said, was a preacher of righteousness. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." That lesson fully elaborated, is all that need be known on the subject of religion. It was known, and hence must have been extensively taught, among the people.

The world, before the flood, was as natural as since. Men were as natural then as now. Many of our theological disquisitions respecting the world before the flood, are too mechanical—too much restricted—for a natural world. They lack expansiveness and comprehension of thought.

I hardly know what Dr. Dwight means by saying that "Cain and Abel performed the public duties of the priesthood for themselves." How *for themselves*? In the nature of the thing, there is but one kind of priesthood.

Dr. Kitto tells us that "what strikes us at first is the remarkable fact of the existence of sacrifice at this early period after the fall." By *remarkable*, he means strange, or unexpected.

I cannot think so. It looks to me perfectly natural, and seems in good keeping with all the analogies of the case. How long would God be expected to wait, and for what reason, and let the world people, and increase, and go on, and increase in sin, before he would make known to man the conditions of salvation? Why not begin the work of religion at once?

It is next to incredible to suppose that God in Christ placed the world in a salvable state, under a gospel dispensation of grace and mercy, and then for two thousand years kept man in ignorance, or in partial ignorance, of these very blessings thus designed for his benefit. The faint, dim, and nearly imperceptible shadowings forth of enigmatical proph-

ecy in the early ages, and which opened slowly and gradually through the twilight of centuries, and which in some thousands of years began to be read slowly and obscurely as it emerged out of the patriarchal or antediluvian ages, has an existence in the imaginations of fanciful theologians, but is neither read in the Book, nor deduced from sound reasoning.

Fairbairn—Typology v. i., p. 230—says that Adam and Eve “would readily imagine, when a scheme of grace was introduced which gave promise of a complete destruction of the adversary, with the infliction of only a partial injury on the woman’s seed, that the whole of their offspring should attain to victory over the power of evil.”

That would depend upon how well they understood the Christian religion.

Again he says: “Eve regarded her first-born as a precious gift of God, the beginning and the pledge of the ascendancy that was to be won over the malice of the tempter. . . . I think it quite impossible,” he continues, “in the circumstances, that the faith of Eve should have gone farther than this.”

And that, too, depends entirely upon the amount of religious teaching they received. If she knew nothing but—“It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,” then I think it quite impossible she could have had any thing like knowledge on the subject at all. The utterance of these mere words would have been to her an unmeaning riddle, and could be of no religious advantage whatever.

But such a supposition is out of the question. These brief words are used by the historian—they are *his* words, employed by *him*, in giving to us a brief and very synoptic account of the things which were done.

The actual religious teachings of these ages, and the real amount of religious knowledge which the people possessed

in detail, is one thing; but the brief historic statement about it, which Moses made, in the account he wrote, is quite another. The latter we have, and it is all we have. The history of religious action and teaching from the birth of Christ to the present hour, might be written in twenty words; but it would be a very brief outline.

And if any one inquires why, upon this hypothesis, Moses did not write more fully, I can reply only by asking, why did not Daniel and Paul write a hundred times more than they did, historic of the religion of their times? Certainly not because there was no more to write, but, I suppose, in each case, because that which was written was deemed sufficient for the purpose in hand.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGION FROM THE FLOOD TO ABRAHAM.

WE have now another long period almost entirely without a written history. From the flood to the call of Abraham we have but about three chapters; and the length of this period, too, is uncertain. Like the former period, there is no known mode of determining the length of it. It may, perhaps, be set down as probable that it was either about three hundred years, or about twelve hundred years. Among learned men who have taken pains to look deeply into this question, I believe the opinion preponderates in favor of the longer period, though the shorter is most commonly in use. The question will most probably never be settled.

There was now but a single family of people on the face of the earth, and they were all together, and all intimately known to each other; and it was a religious family. We had then a pious world. They all knew the reasons why the Lord so terribly destroyed mankind. No people could have had a better or higher appreciation of the difference between sin and holiness than they. They were pious before the deluge, and now having passed through its terrible scenes, their gratitude to God must have been overwhelming. We are now prepared to read the 20th verse

of the 8th chapter of Genesis. Nothing could be more natural, more seasonable, or in better keeping with the spirit of the times and surrounding circumstances.

“And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.”

What sublime language! What holy and pious conduct! All mankind are seen prostrate before the Lord. Nothing had been seen in Eden to compare with it, for there there was no strong predisposition to sin to contend against. But these had overcome the world. They were not holy by primeval innocence, but according to the Christian religion.

It is, I think, a short-sighted idea to suppose that Noah and his family were half-heathen—that they knew nothing about Christianity—had received only a few brief, laconic words of religious teaching, and they of a very hidden, obscure, and uncertain meaning. It is contrary to reason, and I see no support in Scripture for it.

Noah must have been well acquainted with the wide-spread wickedness before the deluge, and with the causes which led to it. He knew very well that it was not owing to any defect in the religious system, nor in the mode of the divine teachings. It was owing to *the wickedness of man*.

But still, it is a question of importance, why it was that the Christian religion did not succeed then, or was less likely to succeed than in after years, it being all the while the same, and man being the same.

It is certain religion did fail, as a general thing, before the flood. And it failed again in the period of which we are now speaking, from Noah to Abraham; or at least, it very nearly failed. And the same thing may be said of the Israelites previously to the exodus. The causes of these failures are not to be looked for in the religion itself, for it

was always the same; but in the manner of its teaching, and the general circumstances of the world.

Immediately after what is said respecting the worship of Noah, after the subsidence of the flood, we have a clear statement of the true character of this worship. It is said: "And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not any more curse the ground for man's sake." It was a worshipping age, looked upon favorably by the Almighty.

But, as in the former case, the religious teachings were directed to the people generally. The religious opportunities of all were sufficiently good, and to all human appearance the re peopling of the world seemed to promise the most favorable religious results. Religion was the regular order of things.

The world, in this period, was not as some theologians seem to have it, a cramped up, mechanical sort of age, devoid almost of history and of incident. Some seem almost to think that the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and a little hunting of one Nimrod, was pretty much all that occurred from the flood to the sending out of Abraham. But the world was really as natural in all things then as now. The increase of the people was no doubt very rapid. But little of the history has come down to us—still it had a history. Noah and his three sons were men of mature age and large experience; and their wives, we have good reason to believe, were women well versed in the affairs of life, and good patterns of piety and religion. Every thing moved on naturally. The years were as long then as now, though not so well computed. A thousand years then was as long as from the days of Charlemagne to the present time. Men pursued the affairs of life, their interests and avocations, then as now. The affairs of the Church, and those of the State,

and social and domestic concern, engaged the minds of men then as now.

The civil government was of a patriarchal form; but after a few hundred years, a portion of it, at least, became monarchical under the bold leadership of that great monarch, Nimrod. He was no doubt a great man—bold, daring, and wicked.

And so, with all the social and religious advantages attendant upon Noah and his immediate posterity, men were sinners, liable to temptation; and without the ecclesiastical advantages of later times, irreligion spread itself abroad wonderfully, so that by the time of Abraham the Church was probably small, though we have no historic account of it beyond a brief allusion to Job and Melchizedek.

CHAPTER III.

A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THE ABRAHAMIC ERA OF THE
CHURCH.

THE Adamic and Noachian periods of the Church—as they might be called—had passed away. In these two periods religious obligation was presented merely spontaneously and universally to mankind; that is, directly to each individual person, but generally we may suppose without those safeguards which connect with or grow out of social and reciprocal obligation and watchfulness. And twice this mode of propagating religion had failed.

It now pleased the Almighty, in addition to the presentation of more direct, personal religious obligation, as between each person and God, to place the Church in a state of more social exclusiveness, where direct and universal reciprocal oversight and interchangeable obligation would work a salutary influence upon personal religion.

The naked laws and obligations of Christianity are one thing, but the presentation of those claims to the consciences and conduct of men is another. Those claims are presented under more or less favorable circumstances. It is best for success that they be so presented as to form a nucleus, or central point around which strong attachments may be

easily formed, and from which religious teachings may radiate.

The strong disposition to worship, originally implanted in man, remains unmoved; but his sinful disposition causes him to look for some other object of worship than the living God. So that in order to place the claims of religion favorably before him, it is necessary to guard him against temptations to idolatry.

The question has been frequently asked, why this great favoritism should be extended to the descendants of Abraham, in preference to all other people. I do not view the dealings of God with them in that light. It was not a favor conferred upon them for their sakes. There must needs be a nucleus, or central point, established somewhere; and the name of the family in which this nucleus should be formed, might as well be Abraham as any other name.

Nor do I subscribe to the teachings of some, that at and after the calling of Abraham all true religion was confined to the Israelites. The history of the Jews gives us a succession, or genealogical account, of a certain ecclesiastical line from those days down to Christ. But what or how much religion—true religion, and of course revealed religion—there was outside this line, the history does not inform us. This subject will be brought forward again, and described more largely in a more appropriate place.

The obligations of religion, however, rested universally on all men. The highest religious attainment was open to all. And the Jewish ecclesiastical system was for the general benefit of mankind, and not for the particular advantage of any classes.

The necessity for a better ecclesiastical arrangement was not found—as some seem to find it—in the mere fact of a general and wide-spread idolatry among mankind, but rather in the social position which religion assumed. It

was not enough that salvation should be made possible. This was long since done. Extrinsic facilities and subsidiary helps were now to be given.

Nothing was more wise, natural, or philosophic, than the Abrahamic arrangement. Wide-spread nationality produces severalty of interest, gives room for party strife, and stimulates to aggrandizement and ambition. And hence the necessity for the social exclusiveness seen in the Jewish community. And hence the bondage in Egypt, and many other historic incidents we meet with in their commonwealth. They had a peculiar national character, a peculiar civil polity, and peculiar ecclesiastical forms.

It was important, also, that the Israelitish mind should be susceptible—not preoccupied or swayed in favor of governmental forms or national prejudices. And so, as an anonymous writer remarks, “They were as new material prepared to receive the moulding of a master-hand, and the impress of a governing mind.”

Miracles were also introduced among the Israelites at the right time, and under the proper circumstances. A miracle is simply an act of God’s immediate power in matters where he generally works through secondary agencies. An act of almighty power, unconnected with known causes, and unaccommodated to man’s feeble capacity, is to man a miracle. And without religious instruction being accompanied by such acts of God, it would be simply impossible for a rational man to believe any system of religion to be divine. Outside of immediate human experience, miracle is the only demonstrative proof that man *can receive* of the truth of any religious system; and it can demonstrate the truth only to the man who witnesses the miracle. But the man who does not witness a miracle, can receive demonstrative evidence of the truth of religion in no way but by experience.

The miracles of Moses, preparatory to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, were peculiarly fitted to their circumstances.

And now commenced a system of religious instruction strikingly appropriate to such a community, and in the condition in which the world then was. And in looking briefly into some of their teachings, we must remember that those people were not then instructed in religious knowledge as we are now. Now religious knowledge is merely *communicated* from one man to another. But they had so lapsed into idolatry, through the corrupting influence of surrounding nations, that they needed to be taught the very germinal ideas of religion. In the space of a few hundred years they had most wonderfully lost a knowledge of true religion. And, as the human mind is constituted, knowledge of any kind is received *progressively*, and in no other way. No full system can be grasped at once. It must be given gradually—building one thought upon another. This rule was observed systematically. And so, by noticing these teachings carefully, any one may see they were at first merely *the being of one God*. See Ex. iii. 13, 14, etc. This was a blow at the very root of idolatry; and in the very beginning of Moses's administration it was well fixed in the Israelitish mind. And in the circumstances of their deliverance from a cruel bondage, and the overthrow of the hosts of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, they were most powerfully instructed in the doctrine of the *power* and *goodness* of the God of Israel. They saw, too, that God's power and goodness were exerted toward them, most powerfully and wonderfully effecting their deliverance. This moved their affections, naturally drawing their hearts in love toward God. These were the first lessons. And all the circumstances surrounding them were most aptly calculated to impress the mind and heart of the people.

And when Moses set out in the course of administering the affairs of Jehovah to his people, thus began—or rather, continued on a larger and better scale—the system of instruction which was so well fitted to prepare them for the communication of Christianity to mankind. For it must be borne in mind, that this was the great design in raising up the Israelitish people—that they might become the pioneers in diffusing true religion over the world; a design which, in the wonderful providence of God, they have fulfilled so nobly and so well.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NECESSITY FOR THE ORIGATION OF IDEAS IN PLANTING THE TRUE RELIGION MORE SOLIDLY.

THERE is no difficulty in the origination of such ideas as pertain to visible or sensible things. The very act of seeing, hearing, feeling, or otherwise sensibly perceiving any thing, fixes the idea—some idea—instantly in the human mind. But how are you going to fix in the mind a clear and distinct idea of something which is not in anywise an object of sense? Let any one attempt to *think* distinctly of something of which he has not heard, has not seen, felt, tasted, nor smelled, and he will at once find that he has undertaken what he cannot perform.

Now, neither God nor religion is an object of sense. How, then, is a man to be brought to think clearly and distinctly about these things? How can he comprehend their principles or understand their rationale?

But there is another question which steps in before this: How came the Israelitish mind to be so exceedingly ignorant of the principles of religion as we find it at the time of the exodus?

There are two considerations which, taken together, might satisfactorily answer this question, and there are, no doubt, others of which we have little or no knowledge. *First.*

From about the time of the death of Joseph, until the deliverance under Moses, the Israelites were in circumstances exceedingly unfavorable to religion. They were in close and cruel bondage to a very idolatrous people. *Secondly*. The religion of mankind, previously to those ages, had no doubt much more of *piety* than *theology* in it. The simple rudiments of religion are few, and easily learned. The religious teachers of the world were, most probably, few in number, comparatively; and their teachings were, no doubt, from necessity or otherwise, confined chiefly to the simple elements of personal piety.

But now, in the progress of things, it becomes necessary that religion should be based more upon its solid theological principles, with more of a practical rationale. And it was perhaps deemed best in the wisdom of God that this rational theology should be at the first introduced amongst a people whose mind, in matters of religion, was nearly a blank.

The human mind, in the various stages of its progressive enlightenment, needs to have the reasons underlying religious truth, so as to grasp and comprehend them. And hence the necessity just now of *originating* and fixing in the mind a number of fundamental theological truths. How well any of them may have been known in previous ages, or to how many or how few they may have been known in any particular age, the history does not inform us.

And so the origination and inculcation of abstract religious ideas became necessary in the Israelitish mind.

After getting well hold of the simple ideas of God's *being*, and of his *power*, and the notion that for some reasons, or under some circumstances, this power is exerted in *their* behalf, and as their friend and protector, it becomes necessary to establish in the mind some substantial knowledge of some of the other divine attributes. And one

of the first questions to solve in the process is, How are they to gain a knowledge of God's *justice*, or the demerit of sin in the divine mind? It is a very easy thing for us now to talk about this matter, and to communicate ideas on the subject from one to another. But suppose the idea did not exist? It is not the general question of the demerit of sin we are looking after, but—How does God look upon sin? This question is to be answered by impressions to be made upon the mind of the Israelites.

And here we may lay down the broad principle, that there is no way by which a person in authority, divine or human, can manifest his opposition to transgression but by affixing a *penalty* thereto. Indeed, the human mind is so constituted that it can receive the impression of demerit in no other way than by some kind of punishment or suffering as the consequence of wrong-doing. And farther: the severity of the punishment will graduate the degree of opposition to sin, and fix the standard of holiness in the law-giver.

How they were enabled to embrace the notion of death and destruction as the penalty for sin—they themselves being justly obnoxious to such punishment—and yet they being spared this penalty, will be looked at when we come to glance at their sacrifices as part of their worship.

It was necessary, also, that they should be impressed with a proper sense of the Divine *Majesty*, and the profound *reverence* with which they should regard and approach him.

Let it be remembered, that they had become exceedingly idolatrous in their notions of worship. Their idols were therefore objects of common familiarity. And it was now necessary to impress them with a proper sense of the awful and unapproachable majesty of the divine character.

This was effected, primarily at least, in the scenery surrounding Mount Sinai at the time of the giving of the law.

The mountain was made to tremble to its very base. A cloud of darkness covered its summit, from which the lightnings leaped out and the thunders rolled, and there was "blackness and darkness and a tempest;" and no man was allowed to touch the mountain lest he should die. All this was well calculated to impress them powerfully with the feeling of awe and reverence toward God, and of admiration for the divine character.

The question is not how these things would affect us; but how would they impress a people in their condition, with their low and groveling views of divinities, with which they had been in the habit of the most common and besotted familiarity.

Notice the first impression: "When the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off, and they said unto Moses, 'Speak thou unto us, and we will hear; but let not God speak unto us, lest we die.' And Moses said unto the people, 'Fear not, for God has come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.'" Ex. xx. 18, 19.

And here, as in hundreds of other places in Scripture, we are by no means to understand that merely these precise words were used by the people and by Moses. The history is intended to give us, very briefly, the gist, the main thing, or substance of what was done.

Such indirect, symbolic representation as this, is always necessary in the *origination* of ideas. Where ideas exist, there are *words* which can be used to communicate them; but where there are no distinct ideas, of course there can be no words, for words are but the oral signs of existing ideas. So we use pictures to represent many things to children, because *they* have not or do not understand the words.

Another very important thing for the Israelites to know

was, that God is *holy—immaculate—pure*, absolutely. Now, how were they to get hold of this idea? The difficulty was, that there was not an object in the material world around them that could be used to represent it. It must, therefore, be worked up by a rising series, or scale, by which one thought may be built upon another.

At an early period, the animals known to them were divided into two classes, clean and unclean. The one class then was purer, better, more excellent than the other; and those only were to be offered in sacrifice. And it must not only be of this class, but a selection of the best—without spot or blemish. And then it was to be *washed* with *clean* water, and thus rendered free from all internal taint or blemish. And then it was to be offered, not by the common people, but by a select class of persons, set apart for that special purpose. And then he was to be washed and attired, in some cases, if not in all, and be thus peculiarly fitted for an approach to the Almighty. And thus the process of one comparison after another very naturally gave them the notion of the highest earthly purity; and the reasons for it transferred the idea to the immaculate character of God.

And this thought, thus set in motion, was carried forward through all the machinery of the Levitical service. The camp was purified, the utensils became sacred, and were purified and repurified; and so purification proceeded upward, step after step, until the convergence of its rays intensified the idea of purity; and so, in their minds, God became the focal center of unearthly and immaculate purity; and thus the purity of God became a doctrine with them.

CHAPTER V.

THE JEWISH SACRIFICES—A BRIEF SKETCH OF THEIR
NATURE AND DESIGN.

NEVER was a wiser or more truly philosophical system for mankind drawn out and set in motion than the Levitical ritualism.

Whatever may be the degree of perfectness to which human knowledge may have attained on any particular subject, it is very natural for men to conclude that they have reached, or very nearly reached, its acme. And so with the science of religion. The common sentiment is, that in this age we know it perfectly. This was the common sentiment in all former ages, and it will no doubt be so in many ages to come. There is much yet to be learned about it.

We have, some of us, a pretty clear idea of what is called the *cross*, in religion, and of *sacrifice*—of *atonement* and of *redemption*. And yet we have pretty clear proof that our own ideas on these subjects are not well settled, in the fact that, in endeavoring to communicate them, we reach and strain from one synonym to another with a conscious lack of perspicuity in both idea and language. We look back into the days of the Israelites when there were no such words as atonement, propitiation, expiation, redemption, satisfaction, vicarious suffering, etc., and we know the reason

why there were not. It was because there were no *ideas* in the mind rendering such words necessary for their transmission. If they had had the ideas, they would soon have manufactured the words; and then, as now, there would have been no necessity for the circuitous and seemingly cumbrous system of teaching which we see in the machinery of the Levitical ritual.

At this remove of time, and with the little history we have, we can but poorly understand all the natural laws, with their reasons, of the Jewish sacrifices. Sacrifice, as a mode of worship, and at that time the best means practicable of teaching Christianity, was instituted, as we have seen, when men began to worship, immediately after the fall. The enlargement and greater perfection of the system at Sinai was eminently calculated to lead the mind on to a farther knowledge of Christ and religion.

Mr. Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Sacrifice, tells us that sacrifices were instituted "to prefigure the sacrifice of Christ." This expression, though not positively untrue, is so definite and sweeping as to lead to a wrong conclusion. It is very true that sacrificial worship was, from the first, intended to *prefigure* the sacrifice of Christ; but it was certainly intended to do much more. It afforded primary instruction in all the principles of religion. Perhaps there is not a doctrine of religion which was not interwoven into and taught by its lessons.

These sacrifices, particularly in the preparation of the victims, were eminently calculated to instruct the mind in a knowledge of God's immaculate purity, and the holiness of his person and character; and it is difficult, if not impossible, to conceive in what other way these important ideas could have been established in the mind of a people conditioned as the early Israelites were. Human language could not do it, for there was none adequate to the task,

nor, in the nature of things, could be, until the *ideas* should first be formed. Language does nothing but express ideas already in existence. It is but a very slight and indirect help in the formation of original thoughts.

There are many abstract ideas of moral and intangible things which come into the mind very readily from our own experience, such as fear, love, compassion, hatred, etc., subjectively considered. But religious ideas, save a few very primary ones, do not come from ourselves: they are foreign to our experience. But in the Jewish sacrifices, we see brought to view all the elements of Christianity.

The variety of this sacrificial machinery, but dimly seen in faint outline by us, was the language of sense, of feeling, and impression, acted out in the most solemn manner, to teach men their true relation to God. The idea that it was a mere system of worship, prescribed to Jews, unsuited to mankind at large, and that after fulfilling a particular object it was "abrogated," and some other forms of worship were set up in its place, is, in my view, to say the least of it, derogatory to the wisdom and stability of God.

The Israelitish ritual was arranged and set up, not for Jews, but for mankind. In that age of the world, with the lights and the means of teaching which then existed, it was the only way in which Christianity could have been successfully taught to men. It met the human constitution on its own ground, and worked in its own channels by natural processes. It was not something different from Christianity, as some vainly suppose, but it was Christianity itself, worked up from its very rudiments.

When a boy begins to learn Mathematics, he uses tables and didactic rules; but after a time, he brings his simple problems to conclusions without their formal use. But he neither abrogates them nor enters upon a better system. The use of cumbrous tables and rules fixed his mind upon

the very truths in question, and he now reaches them with less labor than before. The principles in the system of Jewish sacrifices are used now by Christians everywhere. Where actions and symbols were formerly used, language is now used with greater facility.

See the Israelite, with his victim, coming to sacrifice. It is perhaps a lamb, carefully selected from a select portion of a very select kind; and in this way he is now about to approach the God of his deliverance. He solemnly and formally lays his hands upon his head, figuring the transfer of sin from himself to the innocent victim; and he leans himself upon it, figuring reliance and trust; the innocent is slain, and suffers, not in his eye by any means merely as an animal, but vicariously, in the room and stead of himself. It was, symbolically, loaded with his iniquities, and dies—the innocent for the guilty. Thus he acknowledges before God his own ill desert—that he has sinned and is worthy of death; and he entreats God to accept the sacrifice of the victim instead of his own sacrifice, which he thus solemnly acknowledges would be just.

And now, if you remove a few chronological periods onward, you will see the same *things* taught verbally. Nothing is changed but the language. The Christian understands it as the Israelite did; though quite likely neither understands it perfectly in all its parts, though each understands it in his sphere, and according to his circumstances.

It was in rather a legal than a real and practical sense, it may be said, that the sacrifices “prefigured Christ.” It was not until long after the lengthy and laborious teachings of the prophets, age after age, that the Jews came to know and understand much about a Messiah; and even up to the very period of his appearing, they were but poorly versed in his character and offices; and indeed, at the present day,

this may be said of thousands who are called Christians. The sacrifices taught *religion* first, and Christ afterward.

In considering these ancient modes of worship, and of religious teaching, two or three things should be kept prominently in view.

First. They were by no means always the same; nor was it all done at one time and one place. It was a natural, and not a mechanical system. I do not see how any of the particular descriptions of these things of authors can be correct, because they were practiced in different countries and in different ages very differently. They are found among a great variety of people, in various countries, and stretching over many ages and a great variety of circumstances. Sometimes they were more or less connected with civil polity, and generally they had some connection with political customs.

Secondly. But still the sacrifices, as well as the entire Levitical economy, had in all times and in all countries one general aim and purpose. They embodied the principles of *true religion*, and taught and illustrated them as well as it could be done in the nature of things, in an early ante-Messianic condition of the Church.

Thirdly. These teachings were *before* the advent of Christ. They served the Church then in the same way as the New Testament serves it now; though they were by no means profitable to the same extent. To look at them rightly, we must suppose ourselves to be ante-Messianic Christians, and to be without the teachings which Christ's advent shed upon the world; and this is a very difficult thing to do. It is hard for a man to imagine himself to be ignorant of what he knows.

Fourthly. Worship by sacrifice was, and still is, *Christian worship*. You may tell us of two *dispensations* by giving that very ambiguous and unphilosophic word a better repu-

tation than the character it acquires from philology; but the word of God knows no religion but Christianity; and in the different ages and circumstances of mankind it is taught by whatever means chances to be most appropriate and useful.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCERNING MOSES, WITH SOME OF HIS TRAITS OF CHARACTER AND FITNESS FOR HIS FUTURE OFFICE.

MOSES was one of the most remarkable men of ancient history. He occupies a very large space in it. From infancy his life was most singularly providential. Josephus says he was all his early life an object of jealousy and suspicion at the court of Pharaoh, and that the king's daughter, who adopted him, was his only substantial friend and defender. He mentions an important event in his history which is not alluded to in the Bible. He says that some years after Moses became a man, the Egyptian king became involved in a war with the Ethiopians, and his armies were much worsted and discouraged, and in his extremity he was reluctantly forced almost to place Moses at the head of his troops, and that, by great prudence and forecast, Moses defeated the Ethiopians, and restored peace to Egypt.

And this very act, he says, of saving Pharaoh and his country, increased former jealousies and fears against Moses, by the king and his courtiers, and this was in a great measure the cause of his flight from Pharaoh.

In this retirement from public life, he seemed casually to fall in with Jethro, the prince and priest of Midian.

The question of Moses's religious education has been

solved by critics by attributing it to the teachings of his religious mother, who was his nurse. But this supposes what would seem to require some proof. Is it to be assumed that his mother was a religious woman? If so, she was an extraordinary exception to the general rule. The Israelites had mostly become idolaters. It seems to me much more natural to suppose that whatever of religious character he derived from his people, he acquired by familiar intercourse with them. He, it was true, was a member of the royal family, and the Israelites were slaves in that country, but this did not prevent him from free intercourse among them, and of learning what little there was to learn of true religion from them. They all lived, and thought, and mixed, and communicated, as other such like people would naturally do. His intercourse with them was certainly not confined to his mother, whether she was religious or not.

We learn enough of him to warrant the conclusion that his entire early life, up to probably the time when he was placed at the head of Israel, gave him the very best possible advantages for becoming fitted by knowledge and experience for his important trust.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JOURNEY IN THE WILDERNESS, WITH SOME OF ITS
REASONS AND RESULTS, ESPECIALLY RESPECTING
IDOLATRY.

THE very brief account which we have of the journey through the wilderness, as that country was called, was written, it must be remembered, not for the use and benefit of those persons who participated in the events, so much as for the instruction of those who should live afterward. The history was preserved for the general good of mankind.

At the time of the exodus, there were few people in the world not wholly, or in a large measure, given to idolatry. The Israelites were probably as free from it as most other people; though on this point—the religion of the world outside of the Israelites, as we shall farther see—we are almost wholly destitute of trustworthy historic information. But in order to give true religion a substantial and solid foothold in the world, it was necessary that some people should be wholly freed from this greatest and most powerful enemy of Christianity. This was the great first step toward the thorough Christianization of the world.

The actual traveling which the people did from Egypt to Palestine was exceedingly circuitous, and wandering from place to place, as if they knew not where to go; and

the journey was protracted beyond all lengths reasonably necessary for such a travel. In this way the people were kept exclusively by themselves, and were continually in such condition and circumstances that they must constantly see the most important and palpable displays of the Divine power and goodness. Nothing else could be so well calculated to cure them of idolatry.

Some might imagine that so much teaching could hardly be necessary. We are poorly prepared to judge. The people of Christendom know but little of the wonderfully controlling power of idolatry.

Idolatry is not a mere opinion, but a passion, a disease—a fanaticism, inbred, pervading, endemic, and hereditary. It is a moral derangement, or monomania, more powerful than any other yet discovered in the human constitution. It may be impracticable, if not impossible, to cure any one person outright of idolatry, short of direct miraculous interference. The process must continue on unremittingly through several successive generations.

And then, if you could do so, it would be of little use, so far as permanency was looked to, to cure a part of the people, even half or three-fourths—a whole nation or community must be cured at once, and then be preserved from contact with idolatrous people.

This was done most wonderfully in this case. They were detained in the wilderness, trained, schooled, and disciplined, until a new race had risen up. And yet, after all these wonderful teachings and deliverances, they were but barely fit to enter upon their new career in the promised land, as the pioneers of mankind. Still, this forty years' teaching was perhaps the most profitable school the world ever passed through.

CHAPTER VIII.

ISRAELITES, HEBREWS, AND JEWS—REASONS FOR THE
SEVERAL NAMES, AND THEIR MEANING.

ISRAEL, as is well known, is the name divinely given to Jacob, after he wrestled with the angel; and his descendants took the name from him. The name was a title of honor given him because *as a prince he had power with God*, which remark perhaps we are not very well prepared to understand. The name of Israel will never cease to have high and heavenly associations. They and their descendants were the chosen of God. They were his Church, or, at least, they constituted a large portion of it—the depositaries of his grace and word, and the pioneers in teaching and preaching true religion to mankind.

The name HEBREW is fancied by some to have come from *Heber*, a Kenite, and member of the family of Jethro. But that is not at all likely. The truth, no doubt is, that this name was given to the Israelites after their entrance into Palestine, as significant of their relationship to the country. The word is said to mean *stranger* or *immigrant*, or one having recently come into a country. It is nearly equivalent to *foreigner* with us. Thus they were *Hebrews*, or new-comers in that country. The word was generally applied to them, and it soon became popular, and like all other words used in that way, it soon lost its former signifi-

cation. The name Israel was not lost sight of, but was used in the more popular way.

The term JEW was not known until six hundred years afterward. After the idolatry of Solomon, the nation, under the curse of the Almighty, divided into two kingdoms, under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, as their respective leaders. Those who adhered to the former, the son of Solomon, consisted mainly of the tribe of Judah, which had grown to be very large, and took the name of *Jews* from the name of the tribe—*Judah*; and the other party, retaining the national name, were called *Israel*.

Mr. Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Jew, tells us that, "Not only all the Israelites of future times have been called Jews, but all the descendants of Jacob, from the earliest times, are frequently so called by us at present."

This is evidently a mistake, though Mr. Watson is by no means alone in it. It is well known that the large and powerful house of Ephraim, with nearly all of nine other tribes, which formed the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam, were never, while thus separated, called Jews. Where the descendants of this ancient nation are at present, is not certainly known. This question will be looked into in a future chapter. Mr. Watson does not know that they are not the Anglo-Saxons. While I do not subscribe to that doctrine, which, by the way, has been ably advanced, I do not consider it improbable that much of the blood of Jacob now runs in the veins of that people. The term *Jew* has been applied to the descendants of Judah and Benjamin, and to *their* descendants.

And Mr. Watson is farther in error in supposing that all the lineal descendants of Judah and Benjamin are called Jews "by us at present." They were, in a very general sense, so called during the nationality of Judah; that is,

until shortly after the time of Christ. But since that time, it is well known that only *a portion* of their descendants have been called Jews. There is a popular notion afloat that the people now called Jews comprise the entire progeny of the Jewish people as they existed in Palestine and other countries, at the birth of Christ. But, on reflection, all must see that this is a mistake. Nothing is more plainly or more abundantly taught in the New Testament than this—that at the time of Christ, and in a few years after his death, the Jewish people *divided into two great antagonistic parties*, the one party receiving and following Christ, and the other rejecting him. And it is the *rejecting* Jews, and they only, since that time, that have gone by the name of Jews. Which was the larger and which the smaller of these two parties, numerically, we have now no means of determining with certainty. This question will be inquired into in future chapters. It need perhaps only be remarked just here, that the Scriptures indicate that the party of *receiving*, or *Christian* Jews, were, if not the more numerous of the two, at least very numerous. So that the people called Jews, in these ages, are so far from comprising “all the descendants of Jacob,” that they are but a portion—may be half of the half of those descendants; and it may turn out that we may see that the fraction may possibly be much less than that.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCERNING THE UNKNOWN HISTORY OF ISRAEL, BEING
ONE-HALF OR MORE OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE.

WHEN the great Israelitish nation divided into two nationalities under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, the ten tribes under the latter retained the common name of *Israel*, while the other tribes of Judah and Benjamin took the name of *Jew*, or *Jews*. They thus lived side by side, in Palestine, the greater part of three hundred years, sometimes in peace, but more frequently at war with each other, or with other nations. About seven hundred and twenty years before Christ, Israel, being at war with the King of Assyria, was subjugated, and the greater portion of the people were carried away captive into Assyria; and some years afterward, a considerable portion of the remainder shared the same fate. Here ended the historic nationality of *Israel*, or, as they are oftentimes called, the *ten tribes*. And not only is their nationality lost sight of, but their very existence is no longer known, and they are now only known as the *lost tribes*.

The fruitless and unsatisfactory researches which have been made of late—since the revival of letters—for them, imply that their posterity still exist somewhere in the world, as a distinct nation, or, at least, as a distinct and

separate people. But what evidence have we that this is so?

Upon what ground is it considered necessary, or even possible, to trace down the genealogical descent of the *ten tribes*, for a period of more than two thousand five hundred years since they ceased to exist as a nation?

This possibility arises, perhaps, with many, from the supposition that we are able to do the same thing with the people comprising the kingdom of Judah. But this supposition, we cannot fail to see, on a little careful reflection, is not true. The supposition that the people commonly known as *Jews*, in modern times, compose the entire living posterity of the kingdom of Judah, is certainly a wide mistake. We may hope to see it proved in some future chapters, that they are the descendants of a fragment of a fragment of portions of that nation; and that the peculiar physiological marks by which Jews are distinguished, have arisen entirely outside of lineal descent, and from other than mere ancestral causes.

The kingdom of Israel, as it existed over seven hundred years before Christ, was subjugated, and portions were carried captive, at different times, into foreign countries. Many left Palestine—others returned, irregularly, at different times, and assisted in making up the *Samaritan* branch of the ancient Church. But there being nothing, either civil or ecclesiastical, sufficiently powerful among them to keep them together, they have long since all gone by leakage, and have become mixed and mingled with the people of earth.

One of the best efforts to identify them I have seen, finds them in the ancient Saxons, and so in the present Anglo-Saxon race; and I think it not improbable that more of the descending blood of Israel is to be found in them than elsewhere in any distinct people.

CHAPTER X.

CONCERNING THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS STATE OF THE
CHURCH AT THE TIME OF CHRIST.

WE frequently see it stated in the books, that at the time of Christ, the Church had degenerated into a most deplorable state of morals and religion. Debased corruption and profligacy in morals, with most blinded and besotted ignorance of God and of theology, were the ruling order of things.

I do not know of any inspired history to warrant these wholesale conclusions. Frequently the language of sharp rebuke and accusation is administered; but in all these passages, when fairly and carefully considered, I see nothing which might not have been, or indeed which was not, denounced against them at various times previously. Nor, indeed, do I see any complaints against them which might not have been appropriately mentioned against the Church at periods five hundred or one thousand years later; and, indeed, perhaps most, if not all of these expressions, might not be unjust now. There has never been a time yet when a great deal of ignorance and wickedness was not to be found in the Church. But that that was a time of peculiar wickedness and corruption, beyond what was seen previously, and even subsequently, is an historic fact of which I see no evidence, save in the fancy and imagination of theological writers. This has sometimes been found necessary, in order

to support the favorite and unsound hypothesis of great superiority in the *new Church*, and the *new religion* of Christ.

Much of this wholesale denunciation against the Church at that period, has probably been superinduced, or at least found license, by a few unguarded expressions in Dr. Maclaine's translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History; and these expressions may be more attributable to the translator than the author. Indeed, the learned translator himself tells us that he took considerable liberties with the Latin text of the great historian.

We are told—Part I., c. ii., sec. 5:—“*All* regarded the *whole* of religion as consisting in the rites appointed by Moses, and the performance of some *external* acts of duty toward the Gentiles.” And again, sec. 12: “*They* were accordingly sunk in the most deplorable ignorance of God, and of divine things; and had *no notion* of any other way of rendering themselves acceptable to the Supreme Being than by sacrifices, washings, and the other ceremonies of the Mosaic law.”

The sweeping remarks which I have italicized are, beyond all question, far outside any thing found in the history. Nay, the history contradicts them in many places. But such wide-spread remarks from such a man as Dr. Mosheim, give very large license to later and lesser writers.

With a few exceptions, the Scripture texts from which these conclusions are drawn, do not refer to the Jewish *people* at all; but only to some priests—to Scribes and Pharisees, and such very small classes of persons; or sometimes to certain persons at some particular time and place. Much more is said in the New Testament of the irreligion of the officials, and of the Pharisees and Sadducees, than of the people; and we must remember that all of these sects made up but a handful of the Jewish Church.

Dr. George Smith, of England, in his useful work, *The Hebrew People*, in attempting to show the deep corruption of the Church at the time of Christ, considers the question settled by the parable of the Pharisee and Publican. He says—page 492—that the Pharisee “was the *beau-ideal* of Jewish religion in the time of Christ.” But I see nothing to warrant such a conclusion. If the Pharisee is to be taken as the representative of a class, the Publican should also be regarded as a representative of a larger class; though both Pharisees and Publicans together made but a handful of the Hebrew people. Why not consider the Publican “the *beau-ideal* of Jewish religion in the time of Christ?” Either conclusion would be alike gratuitous and unfair, though they were both Jews.

Moreover, there is another side to this picture. There are expressions in the sacred text respecting the morality and religion of the times, other than those of denunciation and rebuke. Indeed, with all the well-deserved complaints put forth against the Jews at that time, there is some commendation and praise also. They were not all sin and corruption, neither were they all religion and purity. It is said by St. Mark that the common people heard him gladly; and in the Acts of the Apostles we have quite a number of accounts of great masses—multitudes upon multitudes of people, and many of the priests—who were obedient to the faith. Of this we will see more in a future chapter.

And also, in those days, we see that the Jews had in use among them something of a religious literature. There was, of course, no printing, and books or rolls were very costly, and so scarce as to be used by but a very few.

Besides their sacred books, which comprise the Old Testament, they had other books, which bear all the marks of having been written by pious persons of some intelligence. Some of these books we now have, and, singularly enough,

we call them *Apocrypha*. Some of them have, it is true, but a poor theology for the most part; but what they lack here—if we consider the times and circumstances—may be supposed to be partially made up in piety. Then they had the *Targums*. These were explanations of Scripture, written after the captivity. They were a sort of paraphrase, written somewhat in the manner of *Doddridge's Expositor*.

And if they had not many good books, they had, most probably, no bad ones. On the whole, they were a natural people, with natural ways of acting and thinking. They were the true Church of the living God, embodying a good deal of substantial piety, a considerable amount of superstition, bigotry, and sectarianism; a great improvement upon former ages, with some good and some bad theology.

CHAPTER XI.

A CURSORY VIEW OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE AT THE TIME
OF CHRIST, AND OF "DISPENSATIONS."

AT the time of Christ, the Jewish people consisted of what I think might be very properly termed three different Churches, or three different denominations of the Church. First, there were the Hebrew Jews, as they are generally called by way of distinction. They lived in Judea and Galilee, for the most part, and worshiped on great festive occasions at the temple in Jerusalem. Second, there were the Samaritans, who chiefly inhabited Samaria, and worshiped on such occasions at their temple in Mount Gerizim. They were a somewhat mixed people, descended mostly from the Israelites, but, after their dispersion, became mixed somewhat with other nations. Third, there were the Hellenistic Jews, who lived chiefly in Egypt, and had their temple in Heliopolis. These several Churches were opposed to each other in many things, each one claiming to be the true, and only true Church, properly descended from Jacob. Each declined a general ecclesiastical fellowship with either of the others. They each had their own Scriptures, in their own language, for they were people of different languages. The Hebrew Jews spoke the Hebrew, the Samaritans used the Syriac dialect, and the Hellenistic Jews spoke the Greek.

The very stringent meaning generally attempted to be given to the reply to the Saviour by the Samaritan woman at the well, that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, is by no means true. Whether the remark was made by the woman herself, or was introduced by the Evangelist to explain the woman's meaning, it means no more than that there was no good feeling between them generally, and no ecclesiastical fellowship. Samaria lay in the very midst of Palestine, directly between Judea and Galilee. There was much significancy in the remark, (John iv. 4,) that the Saviour, in going to Galilee, must needs go through Samaria. There was no other land-route without crossing the Jordan, and traveling very circuitously through a hilly country. There must have been much *dealing* and intercourse of one sort or another between the Jews of Judea and the Samaritans. Indeed, the Jews journeying with the Saviour had at that very moment gone *to buy meat* from the Samaritans.

The Samaritans were *Jews*, or at least Hebrews—as much so as either of the other Churches above named; though it is quite likely that there had been more of mixing of blood with other people among them than either the Hebrew Jews or the Hellenists. The woman, it is seen, in this instance, claimed direct descent from Jacob, both naturally and ecclesiastically. “Art thou greater than *our* father Jacob?” etc.

The non-intercourse of these three classes of Jews was, after all, at times and in places, rather nominal than real. Sometimes many of them indiscriminately attended the great feast at Jerusalem. Christianity, or Christology, if any should prefer the term, was the ruling, cardinal tenet among all.

In religious writings we have much said about different *dispensations*. The common notion gathered from the cur-

rent writings of the day are, that religious history is divided into two *dispensations*—the Mosaic and the Christian. They are the two different systems of religion, or the two different modes of the Divine dealings with mankind. It is hardly necessary to inquire whether these writings for the most part might be sustained by a stringent verbal criticism. It is enough, perhaps, to know that misteaching is generally the result of the hackneyed use of this much-hackneyed and ambiguous word.

It cannot be denied that there have been the two dispensations above alluded to; and it is equally true that there have been three dispensations, and four, and five, and six, and ten, and forty, and five hundred.

That is to say, in plainer words and better understood, the providence of God has continued among men under a great variety of circumstances, and his favors and grace have been *dispensed* in and among this variety of human condition. And so, there are different dispensations—very different in various parts of the world to-day. The variety of manner in which religious teaching is given and received by men is frequently as great at the same time in different parts of the world as in the same countries in different periods. In the sense in which the word *dispensation* is intended to be used, it cannot by any means be predicated of different *ages* or *periods* of the world exclusively.

The days of Abel were peculiar, and those immediately preceding the flood, and those in, and immediately after; and the period from Abram to Joseph, and others pertaining to Melchizedek's Church; and the bondage, the deliverance, the journey to Palestine, and many, many others.

And just so of different countries and different conditions of things in the same periods. Look at the widely different manner in which religion is dispensed now in highly cultivated countries—in the forest among the Indians, in China,

in Central Africa, at European courts, and the cabin of the black man. In these and many other varieties of life, religion is dispensed to mankind in a great variety of manner. This could not be otherwise.

But the notion that the world is divided chronologically into precise *dispensations*, and that the one closes the day or year before the other begins, is sufficiently fanciful, to be sure, but is supported by nothing that I know of, either in Scripture or the reason of the thing.

And if one will notice, it will be found to be a little remarkable how different writers divide exactly between the Jewish and the Christian *dispensations*. It seems difficult to find the precise day and hour when the one closed and the other began. Schauffler, in his most excellent *Meditations on the Last Days of Christ*, says the old dispensation closed just at the moment when the Saviour and his disciples arose from the table where they ate the last passover in the large upper room at Jerusalem—probably the day before the crucifixion. Others make it close at the time of the death of Christ; and others at the resurrection—at the ascension—at his birth—and at his baptism, etc.

Into such fancies men are led by an error once settled upon. You might as well try to find the precise hour when a man passes from boyhood to manhood; or, upon strictly meteorological principles, the day and hour when winter begins. The varying alternations of Providence do not change with such mechanical exactness.

But the injurious effect practically of fixing these two dispensations is in the comparisons they set up between Moses and Christ. These comparisons almost necessarily degrade the character of the Saviour in the estimation of Christians, while they bewilder the mind with mythical and unreal notions of Moses.

And so we have “the dispensation of Moses,” and “the

dispensation of Christ," and the relative and comparative virtues, advantages, and disadvantages of each, drawn out and commented upon in modes most singularly unscriptural, to say the very least.

Even Mr. John Fletcher, a reasoner of no ordinary ability, in his *Checks to Antinomianism*, when the line of his argument required him to maintain the normal dispensation of freely-offered grace alike always to all people, tells us about "the dispensation of Moses," and contrasts it with that of Christ, and contends that after all God was nearly as merciful two or three thousand years ago as he has been since! Thus he greatly weakens his argument at the very point where it needed strength the most, and where the means of support were so abundant.

Why not speak of the dispensation of David, of Isaiah, of Daniel, or of Paul? Yea, why not of Augustin, of Calvin, or of Wesley?

Who was Moses but a feeble sinner saved by grace? He was a minister, like some of us, and did his duty most of his life. And who is Christ but the omnipotent God—the Lord Jehovah? Most assuredly Christ sustained the same relation to *dispensations* in the time of Moses that he did in the time of Abel, of Paul, or in our own time. And although the duties providentially assigned to Moses in the Church were of the highest and most important character, they were mere *duties*, like those assigned to other servants. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant;" but in no other way than as a servant.

Dr. Henderson says, *Religious Encyclopedia*, p. 465, "What, then, was the dispensation of Moses? In it God appeared chiefly in the character of a lawgiver, and the system of his administration was a species of tutorage and discipline adapted to the condition of weak, carnal, and worldly people. Under that form of God's government,

men became members of his kingdom by birth and parentage—entitled to its privileges by external conformity to its prescribed ritual. . . . The law made nothing perfect, being intended only as the introduction of a better hope.”

I can scarcely see how greater or much more important untruths could be stated in so small a compass. From this we would understand, that prior to eighteen hundred years ago, men were saved—“became members of his kingdom”—by birth and the mere performance of external rites. This, perhaps, might do for some supposed human *dispensation*, or might harmonize with some human errors, but most assuredly no divine dispensation of either grace or judgment ever admitted any person into the favor or kingdom of God on any conditions other than repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, Moses never taught, so far as we know, any other conditions of salvation.

“Chiefly in the character of a lawgiver”? Such bald perversion is absolutely unpardonable. He was and is a lawgiver in and during every day since the intimation of a Saviour, in the days of Adam, until this present day, in exactly the same sense. Under the law—the original constitution—God was wholly and exclusively a lawgiver; but under the gospel—when Christ intervened—thousands of years before Moses was born, *salvation* was offered to man as it is now, and in no other way.

I ask Dr. Henderson if the book of Psalms was written by St. Paul, or in his day? Under the inspiration of such high strains of devotion did “men become members of his kingdom by birth and parentage”? And were they entitled to the privileges thereof by “external conformity to its prescribed ritual”? It is not less than a solemn mockery to use such language after reading the 119th Psalm; and, indeed, most of the others.

“The law made nothing perfect”? The law was and is

absolutely and essentially perfect. It "made" nothing—perfect or imperfect—good or bad. It is only a *law*—a perfect law, demanding perfect obedience. Nor is it "the introduction of a better hope." It introduced no gospel—in its very nature it was totally ignorant of a gospel or of salvation in any way. It knew nothing but its own sanctions. It was a benevolent dispensation of mere justice; and because that was its character, the gospel, a totally new and foreign thing, was introduced over and above its provisions.

But a chronological *dispensation* of "the law," or a "legal dispensation," since the days of Adam, is utterly unknown to Scripture, and against all Scripture.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCERNING THE JEWISH SECTS, AND THEIR RELATION TO
THE CHURCH AND JEWISH COMMONWEALTH.

FROM what we frequently read, many draw the conclusion that the Jewish people, as a whole, were divided into three religious sects, viz., the *Pharisees*, the *Sadducees*, and the *Essenes*. This is a mistake. All these sects combined, formed but a mere handful of the Jewish people. Indeed, they were not *sects*, or separate denominational Churches, as we now understand that term, but were a very different thing. On this subject I believe we have no authority, except the New Testament, Josephus, and Philo; and in these books they are never treated as religious sects, or denominations, but as sects or schools in philosophy and politics. The Scriptures do not pretend to describe their particular relation to the Jewish Church and people, but Josephus does, repeatedly and particularly; and he always calls them sects of philosophy. We would now call such associations schools, or societies, or political parties. They were, nevertheless, members of the Church, and, comprising many of the *literati* of the day, of which there was then but the merest fragment, they exercised much religious influence. In those days, philosophy and religion were very much mixed up in the teachings of those who were educated.

They arose but a short time—less than two hundred years—before the time of Christ, and were mere schools, or social societies, associated together for the ostensible purpose of teaching rules of moral and civil philosophy; and then, after a time, assuming to embody a good deal of wisdom and literary knowledge, they claimed—and in many things very correctly, no doubt—the ability to construe the Scriptures better than anybody else, and so, to teach religious doctrines.

Josephus calls them “*sects of philosophy*,” and estimates the Pharisees—the highest figure—at about six thousand, and the Essenes at four thousand; though from the mention he makes of them, I should think it probable that there was not always a distinct and personal membership in these societies, but that, like other parties of a somewhat similar character, the membership was loose and indefinite, rather than personal and specific. Many persons favored them severally, and their peculiarities, more or less, and were more or less identified with them. See Josephus’s *Antiquities*, Book XVII., c. ii., sec. 4, and Book XVIII., c. i., sec. 5. The Sadducees are generally understood to have been very few in number, as compared with either of the other sects.

Because some Pharisees are spoken of in Scripture as proud and ostentatious in religion, and ignorant of much sound doctrine, we are taught sometimes, in very sweeping language, that they were all notoriously ignorant and corrupt. But we should remember that St. Paul, after he had been preaching the gospel more than twenty years, avowed himself still a Pharisee. Some of the authors tell us that he *had been* a Pharisee. But this “*had been*” is a mere human notion, foisted upon the divine teaching, and entirely without authority, and against authority.

It is quite probable that an undue importance is oftentimes given to these Jewish associations. The probability

is that they had no legal connection with the Church, any more than Freemasons, or members of temperance or literary societies have now. They were outside associations, having ostensibly in view improvement in morals, philosophy, and literature. In those days there was, among what were called literary men, much contention and stickling about questions in philosophy and morals; though we must remember that there was but one man, in perhaps five hundred or in thousands, who possessed any thing like a literary education, or could read and write.

Where religious errors are affirmed of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the meaning intended evidently is, that they prevailed generally—not that they were absolute and specific conditions of association. St. Paul undoubtedly died a Pharisee. I refer to both the New Testament and Josephus's history, for the strict correctness of these observations.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN THE BAPTIST—HIS OFFICE AND RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

THIS highly distinguished personage certainly acted a most important part in religion in his day, though he is but very briefly mentioned in the sacred narrative. His mission and work have probably never been fully appreciated or well understood.

The world was now drawing on to that state of things which rendered it proper for the Saviour to be *seen*—to be intelligibly introduced to mankind. The time marked out by the prophets had matured, and among the most intelligent there was a general expectation of the appearance.

And now Christ was *about to* appear among men, and put an end to a farther *anticipation* of his coming, to which the Church had been so accustomed in all former days. And we now inquire, What was naturally necessary in order that he might meet such a reception as the necessities of the case required? He was to be born of a woman—some woman; and somebody's child, growing up among his acquaintances and friends, would lay claims to the Messiahship; and these claims must needs be examined, canvassed, scrutinized, and decided upon, not only by his immediate friends and a few pious persons, but by the entire Church; and every individual person in the whole Church must decide between the

one true Christ and many—no one could know how many—false Christs that might arise.

Again: The most accurate prophecies did by no means satisfactorily point out the very year in which Christ should come. It might be a few years earlier or a few years later, as those prophecies were understood.

I do not mean that, with us now afterward, there is any doubt as to these prophetic numbers; but, as is the case with all prophecies, with them beforehand the precise time could not be, and indeed it was not, determined satisfactorily.

Now, if some instrumentality could be set on foot by which *the very time* could not only be pointed out, but be implicitly relied upon by the great mass of the Church, and have the mind prominently aroused and fixed upon it, it would evidently facilitate religious matters very much. A great point would be gained. Indeed, something of the sort seems to be clearly necessary.

These considerations, if looked at more fully than I undertake to write them, will furnish the reasons for the special ministry of the Baptist just at this time.

We then proceed to inquire, *How, and to what extent, the precise time of Christ's appearance was made known to the Hebrew people, and the immediate effect of it?*

So far as the personal ministry of the Baptist is concerned, it is by no means difficult to see how he could convince all who could attend upon his ministry that the time for the Messiah's appearance had come; and we can easily see that he could baptize the people into this faith. By this baptism I mean that the people, by the solemn act of baptism, would make public acknowledgment of their belief in this great religious fact.

The field of his actual labor seems to have been in the region of the Jordan—both sides of it—from the mouth, at

the Dead Sea, extending upward not less than twenty-five, and perhaps forty or fifty, miles; and including at least a portion of Gilead, and no doubt a portion of Samaria. But this field of labor is described only as "the wilderness;" that is, the country—outside the city.

We can but believe that his preaching was wonderfully attracting, and that great masses thronged him constantly. We do not know the length of the time of his ministry, but it was probably from about three to five years.

His great business was to convince the people that the time of the Messiah was then present; and secondly, to exhort the people to repentance. The one naturally suggests and includes the other. He baptized his disciples into these two things: repentance toward God, and faith in the now present, visible existence of the Saviour. This latter is a different thing from the general doctrine of a Saviour—that had always been a doctrine of the entire Church. But their Christianity was naturally fuller, or more complete, when, in addition to the general doctrine—all that previously could be believed—they recognized his actual presence in proper person.

There is good reason to believe that he preached to, and baptized into this faith, a large proportion of the people of Judea and Gilead, and many of Samaria and other portions of Palestine. He roused the whole Hebrew nation: first, to a vivid remembrance of their great doctrine of a Saviour; and secondly, to the vitally important fact that the time of the great advent was then upon them.

This is what is meant by *preparing his way*. Without such an awakening and popular belief of the veritable presence of the Saviour, produced by some outside instrumentality, he would have lacked much of the magisterial prestige and moral force which did so powerfully and so wonderfully commend him to the Jewish people; and without which he

might not, naturally, have attained such foothold as was necessary to the success of his cause.

The doctrine of a Messiah was common among the Jews; nothing was better understood nor more uniformly acknowledged. But the actual coming was put off for posterity. No one expected it to occur in *his* day. It was entirely a thing of the future. But now the doctrine is put on very different grounds: now the people then living are to see him. He is no longer to be a Saviour *anticipated* in religious belief, but a Messiah to be seen in our own day—a Saviour already born, and even now living amongst us.

This is a vitally important feature in the theology of that day; and yet it cannot be called a new doctrine, but the completion of a doctrine which had long been progressing toward completion. It is no more a new doctrine than the death of a Christian is a new doctrine. The mission of the Baptist was therefore indispensable, or at least, in the highest degree useful, to a proper and practical understanding of an old and well-settled doctrine of the Church.

We come next to inquire briefly into *John's Baptism*. *What was it? Was it different, and if so, in what was it different from Christian Baptism?*

Few things in theology have given rise to so much shallow-water controversy as Christian Baptism. Into these debates I have no occasion to enter. If I could spare the candle, there are other objections.

Much has been written about the *legal mode* of baptizing, as if a thing could be *done* in an *illegal mode*. That is impossible. Law—any law—divine or human, refers to *things*, and things only, and not in anywise to the *mode* of doing things. That, in the very nature of things, is left to the agent at will. Command requires an agent to do or to not do *things*. Here law ends. You might as well attempt to prescribe the manner of *not* doing prohibited

things, as the manner of doing enjoined things. There is no such thing. Nothing can be commanded but *things*. Modes are not subjects of command. It is true that several things frequently make up the sum of the mode of doing a more general thing; still, *things*, and things only, are commanded to be done.

Baptism, as performed by John, is very abruptly introduced without explanation; and is not, therefore, well understood in all its bearings. It was certainly a significant ceremonial washing performed with or in water, more or less being used in the performance.

The word *baptism* does not occur in the Old Testament; but the thing meant is clearly alluded to. But in the days of the Baptist the rite was used with a more definite and explicit purpose than formerly. Religious washings, or lustrations, were long known among the Jews. They were religious acts or ceremonies, indicating generally, if not uniformly, two things: first, emblematical cleansing, or purification; and, secondly, the sign of an assumption, profession, or acknowledgment of a religious obligation, or the confession of a belief in some religious fact or doctrine. These things naturally call for some external ceremony to give them force, and make them patent both to the subject and to the Church.

From a very early period, the Hebrew people were accustomed to these religious washings. They became more specific and distinct in process of time; and the thing became more and better understood as to the end and import. They possessed the character of a sacrament from the first, but in these ages they had acquired and possessed a more distinct end and object in the ritual of the Church.

So that John's baptism was not a new thing. This we are obliged to infer from the question asked in John i. 25.

The Sanhedrim did not ask him what new rite he was introducing, but what authority *he* had to minister it.

John was sent to *prepare the way of the Lord*. Now, it is important to inquire, How did this popular Jewish baptism prepare the way for the introduction of the Saviour's work and ministry? And this is the same as to inquire, *Into what* did John baptize these members of the Church? *Into what* belief, faith, profession? What obligation do they assume in this baptism? To what do they profess themselves bound by it? or what religious fact or doctrine does it announce?

If we look upon these times as natural times, and these people as natural people—thinking, reasoning, and acting as men would naturally do in such circumstances—we will come to the conclusion that this is nothing more nor less than a baptismal or sacramental confession that *Christ had come*, and that they personally subscribed to the fact.

In this there was nothing new. The seers and prophets of old, and they and their fathers, had always believed he *would* come, and this was but the consummation of that faith.

The baptismal confession was necessary, because of the vital importance of the fact, and that in its nature it required specific belief. The truth of the fact, or its importance in the system of religion, or the divine instruction given to John to publish it, does not insure its universal belief; and hence the necessity of knowing, publicly and privately, who do receive it as matter of faith.

Thus, they who were baptized, were committed to the fact—the great fact—that the *time* of Christ had come. Thus his *way* was *prepared* practically and to purpose.

And we come next to inquire a little farther into the repentance so prominently connected with the ministry of the Baptist. I am not able to discern the striking peculiarities

which many seem to see in the *repentance* preached by John. Repentance is a simple, natural concomitant of religion everywhere and in all circumstances. No Christian grace nor religious feature can rest on any thing else. The degree of repentance is the measure of practical godliness then, and now, and always.

There are, however, some noteworthy considerations, not in the repentance which John preached, but in the natural fitness of its introduction and enforcement just then, and in the prominent manner in which it was done by this eminent minister.

The Church had then, for thousands of years, been looking forward to a coming Saviour. The more pious and intelligent paid much attention to the subject, while the thoughtless masses cared but little about it. The prophecies were carefully read by many, and with a variety of opinion. And now we see a well-authenticated teaching, published far and wide, that the period of the Messiah's advent is now! Our own eyes shall see the Emmanuel! He is even now born amongst us! Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is thus peculiarly at hand.

Moreover, the repentance preached by John was strictly a *religious duty*, and not a mere sorrow or distress. So that this preaching and baptism was, as far as practicable, calculated to remove from the minds of the people the notion which had grown up considerably, that their Messiah was to be a civil deliverer. He thus gave them to understand that this whole matter of national expectation of a Messiah was strictly a religious, and in no sense a civil or political question.

The people were unprepared for the Saviour, and in this, that they generally, or at least many of them, looked for a temporal prince. But the preaching of John disabused their minds, and showed that it was strictly a religious

teaching that was to be looked for. And many were baptized into this belief and confession.

What relation did John and his disciples sustain to Christ and his disciples?—In Matt. ix. 14, Luke v. 33, and elsewhere, the disciples of John and of Christ are alluded to severally, and in distinction from each other; and from this and other things, many erroneously suppose that in some sort, or to some extent, they formed different ecclesiastical associations. The term disciple, as anciently used, had scarcely an ecclesiastical signification at all; it was used to denote *the followers of a leader* in any thing.

There was among them nothing approaching a separate Church-relationship; they were all members of the Church; and there was but one Church. The question of ecclesiastical jurisdiction or Church-membership, did not enter into their matters at all. John was distinguished from other Jewish priests only as to the matter of his preaching. His being the special herald of Christ was a mere extraordinary appointment.

Both the disciples of John, and those of Christ, were regular, ordinary Church-members; and they were called their *disciples* because they were great and extraordinary leaders in the ministry; and so many were called Moses's disciples. So they were—or ought to have been—the disciples of Moses, and of John, and of Christ.

What relation did the Jewish sects bear to John and to his disciples?—It has been already explained that the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes were mere societies, or schools, in the Church, of no considerable numerical extent; they, in the aggregate, numbering but a few thousand. They had no particular relation to either John or his disciples—many of them were among his disciples.

In the third chapter of Matthew it is said that John saw “many” of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his bap-

tism; and so they became his disciples indiscriminately with others. Their association with these sects had nothing whatever to do with his preaching, nor with their assent to it.

The severe admonition he administered to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "O generation of vipers," etc., mentioned in Matt. iii. 7, deserves notice here. In the first place, we are by no means to suppose, as some seem to, that on some one occasion he merely uttered these words as he saw some of these persons approaching him to be baptized. Both Pharisees and Sadducees were, no doubt, coming to him on many occasions, indiscriminately with others, for months or years; and knowing the errors in religion to which they were generally addicted, he would, when circumstances called for it, administer to them a lesson touching these errors. We have some intimation as to these errors, or some of them; and it would be exceedingly pertinent in the preacher occasionally to wake them up to a sense of their heresies, by asking them why they should deem it necessary to come to the baptism of repentance for sin, and a belief in the near approach of the Messiah, if they already considered themselves so much purer and holier than other people.

He preached to all the proper Judaism of their fathers, and of Christianity, and showed their literary men, who made such pretensions to biblical knowledge, how greatly they were mistaken, and how they would lead to deism, and a repudiation of the very doctrine of a Messiah.

The Baptist's relation to Christ, more personally considered.
—There were some personal peculiarities about John the Baptist, not particularly mentioned, which at once pointed him out as a most extraordinary man. Many expected to find in him the Messiah of their religion; and indeed many, for a time, believed him to be the Christ. This was so

common, that he frequently found it necessary to disclaim it directly and publicly. These explanations were, no doubt, frequently and elaborately made; not so much, however, in regard to himself, as to show the magisterial greatness and incomparable dignity of Christ. By his side, he himself was utterly insignificant.

The personal and social intercourse between Christ and John seems not to have been close or intimate. The precise meaning of John, in John i. 31—"I knew him not"—is not quite certainly known. They were nearly related, and their parents were intimate friends, as appears from the first chapter of John; but it was perhaps necessary, in order for John's testimony to possess the greatest amount of force practicable, that they should not be personal and intimate friends; though whatever may have been the condition of things between the two men personally, John did not undertake to decide in what particular individual the Messiahship resided until the divine attestation was given.

"On whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John i. 33. Then John identifies the person, and says: "And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God."

What was the meaning and import of Christ's baptism by John?—In these later days, there being but one end and meaning in *baptism*, we are very apt to attach that meaning to the word wherever we find it. A little reflection, however, should teach us that, in the nature of things, the word could not by possibility have had the same meaning before the death and resurrection of Christ as afterward. And a little farther reflection will show us that, as applied to Christ—he being the subject of it—it must of necessity have had a different signification still, in some respects. With him it could have had no reference to *personal purification*,

as in other cases. With him it could have no reference to *sin*, there being no sin in the case to refer to. Neither could it have been to ratify and establish his ecclesiastical relation, for that is fixed and made patent by the very nature of things. But some have supposed this baptism to have been submitted to for the purpose of setting an example to men in all after-time. This could not be; because, first, no such example was needed then nor now. Man might need some stimulant to the undertaking of an obligation, religious or otherwise; but baptism is the mere sealing or ratifying of an existing obligation. This is quite natural, and is not performed with reluctance. And secondly, the act of Christ in such a matter could hardly be said to be an example to *us*—the inauguration of a king is not an *example* to the subjects.

These difficulties remove, if we consider the baptism of Christ to refer to his theocratic reign as the universal prince of mankind. Here we see the fundamental idea of baptism. It marks a new course of life, and fixes the public seal of an obligation. And this suggests force and meaning to the observation of John: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" The explanations of the Saviour, but very laconically given in the text, reconciles John's scruples.

John's relation to the dispensations of religion.—The very ambiguous term "dispensation" has been used, sometimes to throw more, and sometimes less, light upon the ways of God in regard to mankind.

Mr. R. Watson says of the several dispensations of religion, that "all these were adapted to the conditions of the human race at these several periods: all in regular succession were mutually connected and rendered preparatory one to the other; and all were subservient to the design of saving the world and promoting the perfection and

happiness of its rational and moral inhabitants." This is all well enough, if it be farther understood that the chronological relation of these dispensations is by no means specific and distinct; but when these several dispensations are separated by a distinct and specific relationship—that the one ends exactly where the other begins—that the world is divided into these precise dispensations, as so many chronological eras—when we thus understand the term, we place the providence of God under rules which it never prescribed for itself. There are no such dispensations as these.

In dispensing his grace and mercy to mankind, God in his providence has always had respect to the gradually changing aspects and conditions of the world; and so there could be no specific termination of the one and beginning of the other. Some tell us precisely the number of dispensations there have been, and that this current one and one more will conclude this earthly scene. This present, we are told, is a dispensation of *grace*; as if, since the fall of man, there had been any other.

And so we are taught that the life and ministry of John the Baptist includes one complete dispensation. It was a short but important one, fitting exactly between the *Jewish* and the *Christian* dispensations.

This is too fanciful to be true. God does not deal with men in that way. There have been different conditions of the Church, and of the world: these are ever-varying. The time of the preaching of John may be spoken of as a dispensation in the same sense as the same thing may be predicated of the preaching of any other eminent minister whose life marks an epoch in the history of the Church.

Different eras, or dispensations, having reference to different things, may be considered as beginning and ending at any place in chronology; and still particular conditions of

the Church or the world may be regarded as different dispensations of Providence. The period of the Jewish captivity may be regarded as a peculiar dispensation of God's mercy and grace; and so of the journey in the wilderness. The period of the personal ministry of the Saviour was the most glorious dispensation of God's ways to man the world has seen. The period commonly called the Dark Ages was a peculiar dispensation; and so of the Reformation, under the ministry of Luther.

In this sense the ministry of John the Baptist may be regarded a striking and peculiar dispensation of the mercy and grace of God; but not in the legal sense frequently meant. In a more general sense, there is but one dispensation—that included in the period of man's probation.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ALLEGED CORRUPTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE TIME
OF CHRIST FARTHER CONSIDERED AND REFUTED.

THE notion of two religions, *Judaism* and *Christianity*, differing from and opposing each other—the one a bad or defective, and the other a good and complete religion—furnishes a reason, if not a necessity, for making the Church, at the time of Christ, to appear exceedingly corrupt; and so it has become fashionable to denounce both its morals and religion in the most unmeasured terms. It is highly needful that this subject be looked into a little farther than the observations in a former chapter lead us.

Dr. Clarke, in his comment on Matthew iii. 3, says: “The Jewish Church was that *desert country* to which John was sent to announce the coming of the Messiah. It was destitute, at that time, of all religious cultivation, and of the spirit and practice of piety, and John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord, by preaching the doctrine of *repentance*.”

Such wholesale remarks as these can by no means be justified. For this idea of “that desert country” we are indebted entirely to the Doctor’s fancy; and as to the Church being at that time, or any other, destitute of *all* religious cultivation, and having *none* of the spirit or practice of piety, it is quite out of the question. If the Doctor’s

remarks are true, then the Jewish people at this time were a completely heathen people; whereas, it is an unquestioned fact that their theory of religion was precisely what ours is now, so far as the subjective history of religion rendered this possible. They did not believe in a *crucified* and *risen* Saviour, for at that time such religious truths did not exist. But they believed, or at least claimed or professed to believe, in the same Saviour we believe in now.

How far there was individual or popular departure from their own written religious tenets, as is the case abundantly in the Church now, is another question; but that the Scripture was *wholly* departed from, is what nobody ever pretended to believe.

Lessons from the Scriptures—the same Scriptures we have now—that is, the Old Testament, were publicly read, in solemn worship, usually in four hundred places, to so many worshipping congregations, on every Sabbath-day, in the city of Jerusalem alone; and in how many other places we do not know; but from what we know of the existence of the Church out of the city, all over Palestine, and away in foreign countries, there must have been thousands of churches—that is, synagogues—that is, houses of worship. And not only did they read Scripture lessons in public worship, but they, in connection therewith, just as we do now, prayed once or twice, and frequently sung psalms, and uniformly listened to a religious discourse, or sermon; all of which acts of worship were supposed to conform to the religious lessons so read. Their regular Sabbath-day worship was almost precisely what ours is now, except that the New Testament was not then in existence.

And yet, we are told by the Doctor, that there was *no* religious cultivation among them, nor *any* of the spirit or *practice* of piety. It is a glaring mistake.

Such expressions as the above, from Dr. Clarke, could

easily be quoted from other portions of his writings, and also from many other authors of high standing. This may be based, if upon any thing, upon expressions in the gospel respecting, not the Jewish Church, or people, but some scribes and Pharisees, and certain persons here and there. But it seems strangely to be forgotten that all the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees combined, made up but the merest handful of the Jewish people. To speak of them, or here and there some few of them, as is generally the case, is one thing; but to speak of the Church, or great mass of the Jewish people in all countries, is quite a different thing.

It is, however, very readily conceded that, prior to the crucifixion, the Church generally entertained very low and inadequate views of religion; and it is also well known that through the preaching of Christ, of John, and of the apostles and others, religion revived greatly during the lifetime of Jesus, and immediately after the ascension. But just here there are a few well-grounded considerations which might be profitably noticed:

First. The incidental mention, which is frequently made in the New Testament, of the immorality and irreligion of some of the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and Sadducees, which is generally introduced by way of illustration or casual notice, does not, of itself, give us any very clear information as to the state of religion generally in the Church at that time; and I know of no good reason we have to conclude that they were looked upon as leaders in the Church, though many of them assumed to lead and to teach. The Church numbered, probably, six millions of persons. Josephus reckons six thousand Pharisees, and the Sadducees, we know, were composed of a comparatively few persons of wealth and distinction. And, moreover, the preaching and exhortations of the New Testament, particularly those of the Saviour, refer almost wholly to the *sins*

of the people. His exposures of sin were prominent, bold, and outspoken. He searched it out wherever it was to be found, and denounced it in the plainest and broadest terms. It is very true that he met with sin wherever he went, as is seen from his denunciations of it; but he nowhere undertakes to give even the most general account of the morals or religion of the Church. Here, now, one-tenth or one-twentieth of the people are pious. Perhaps it was as bad then, may be worse; but certainly, from all the Saviour or the apostles have told us—indeed, from all we read in the New Testament—there might have been then in Palestine hundreds of thousands of devotedly pious people.

Secondly. As before observed, the Church at that time had something of a religious literature, which gives some clue to the manner in which the Bible—the same we now have—was then understood. These writings, it is true, have had a rather singular fortune in later times. They have certainly long since ceased to be *apocryphal*, though they are still so called; and the relation they are generally placed in to the sacred text, gives them a position they are by no means entitled to. They contain the religious views of their unknown authors; and from some of them, which there is good reason to believe existed before the coming of Christ, we make a few extracts:

“He that feareth the Lord, will repent from his heart.” 2 Esdras ix. 11. “As yet place of repentance was open unto them.” Wisdom xii. 10. Esdras speaks distinctly of God’s pardon of sin, and says he is “mighty to forgive.” “Forgive thy neighbor the hurt he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest.”

Many and much more extensive extracts might be made from these books, proving that the people at least tolerably well understood the fundamental principles of religion.

Thirdly. The doctrine of repentance, as preached among

the people so powerfully by John, was not, as we have every reason to believe, intended or regarded as a new thing. He merely enforced, as one would now, a well-understood tenet of the Church.

Fourthly. Philo, a celebrated and pious Jew, and historian of those times, is thus quoted by Dr. Smith, in his *Hebrew People*: "It is our duty to trust to God to cleanse and beautify our frame, and not to think that we are of ourselves capable, without his heavenly grace, to purge and wash away the spots with which our nature abounds." And again: "Faith in God is the noblest of all virtues." Again: "The only sure and well-founded blessing to which we can trust is faith in God. It is the comfort of life, and comprehends every salutary hope. It is the diminution of evil, and productive of good; the ruin of demoniacal influences and promotive of true godliness. It affords a title to happiness, and is the improvement of the human soul, when the soul reposes itself, and confides in the great Author of our being, who can do all things, but wills only and determines what is best." Again: "If, then, they have from their very souls a just contrition, and are changed, and have humbled themselves of their past errors, acknowledging and confessing their sins, having their conscience purified first in sincerity and truth, to the Power who knows their sins, and afterward by confession to those who may thereby be edified; such persons shall find pardon from the Saviour and merciful God, and receive a most choice and great advantage of being made like the Logos of God, who was originally the great archetype after which the soul of man was formed."

Very many extracts might be made from him, showing that he understood and taught the main principles of religion well. And when we consider the high and practical value they placed on their sacred books, and the extensive manner in which they were taught in religious

lessons every Sabbath-day, we are obliged to conclude that, notwithstanding all the conflicting influences to which they were subject, there existed among the Hebrew people a rich and large amount of sterling theology, and that it stood out plainly in the Church at the time the Saviour made his appearance among them. The great elements of religious truth which form the very soul of practical godliness, and which are the richest gifts in the range of revelation, are all found here.

The purity of man's primitive nature is here asserted. His present fallen nature, polluted and hapless state, is asserted to be such that nothing but the grace of God can meliorate his condition. The necessity of sincere repentance and faith in God is maintained as lying at the foundation of all practical piety. The happy results of these, in the amendments of the life, the washing away of sin, and the attainment of pardon, are all held forth; and ultimately a hope is exhibited of a restoration to the likeness of the Logos of God, after the image of whom the mind of man was originally formed.

Fifthly. And when the Saviour himself came, we do not find him teaching and explaining the principles of religion; neither did his apostles do so. We do not see them explaining the elements of theological truth. On the contrary, they found an existing orthodoxy well understood everywhere. When the Saviour spoke of penitence, faith, pardon, or prayer, he did not have to explain these things to the people—they were all well understood; and this very fact—that the people well understood this religious phraseology—is conclusive evidence against the truth of the sweeping denunciations we so frequently meet with of the wide-spread, deep, and total corruption and ignorance of those times.

Let any man read *Simpson's Plea*, or any such work,

respecting the religion of England at or about the close of the last century; or D'Aubigné, two centuries before, and he will find far more just complaint against the Church then than is read in the New Testament. Indeed, if far more had been said than is said in the Scriptures, denunciatory of the piety of the Church at the time of the coming and life of the Saviour, it would not be absolutely incompatible with the supposition that the Church at that time contained an amount of piety that would compare reasonably well with the Church at many periods since, or even now, in many parts of it. Indeed, I know of nothing in the New Testament, properly understood as to its application, denunciatory or depreciatory of the Church then, which might not be truthfully repeated now.

While I believe, therefore, that the irreligion of those times was greater than is anywhere plainly and in terms set forth in the New Testament, I do not see any evidence, outside the imagination of men of these later times, of the deep and universal apostasy of the Church at that time, which they, many of them, so unqualifiedly represent.

I marvel, therefore, when I see such a man as Dr. Nevin—Biblical Antiquities, p. 255—gravely write down that old Simeon, and pious Anna, *and others*, were exceptions to the uniform, wholesale impiety of the Israelitish nation!

Dr. Nevin says farther: "Yet even these appear, for the most part, to have entertained the notion that the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom were to be enjoyed especially by the Jews, and that the Gentiles, in order to have part in them, would be required to unite themselves, as proselytes, with the Israelitish Church."

I think the Doctor is mistaken in supposing that that belief was entertained among pious Jews, "for the most part." The belief was universal, and, it may be very safely

added, *it was a correct belief*. The benefits of religion, to be enjoyed by Gentiles, or anybody else, required them "to unite themselves, as proselytes, with the Israelitish Church." That was the very thing to be done: *for Gentiles "to unite themselves, as proselytes, with the Israelitish Church."* That was the Church—the true Church—there has never been any other. The Saviour and the apostles succeeded, in a goodly degree, in inducing men to become proselytes to the Israelitish Church. That was, and is, the great business of the ministry. Let the reader mark this point: we expect to have more to say about it.

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT IS JUDAISM?

IN order to be well understood as we pass on, it is highly needful that the question at the head of this chapter be fully answered and well understood. Logomachy is dispute, not argument. A war of words is the most useless of all wars; and an error in words is but an etymological error. Fair debaters deal with each other's meaning.

In ecclesiastical discussions we frequently meet with the word *Judaism*. What does the author *mean* by the expression? The word does not, I believe, occur in the English Scriptures.

Buck's Dictionary tells us that Judaism is "the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews, the descendants of Abraham." Watson's Dictionary tells us that Judaism is "the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews, the descendants of Abraham." And he then explains that the laws composing Judaism "are contained in the books of the Old Testament." Webster's Dictionary tells us that Judaism is "the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews as enjoined in the law of Moses." Henderson's edition of Buck explains, though he does not state it in exact terms, that Judaism is the written religion of the Old Testament.

These definitions are all the same, and are expressed nearly in the same words. I know of no authority that differs from this.

The Old Testament was the Bible of the Jews, or of the world—or of the Church, before the New was written. We, then, are at no loss to see and define Judaism with precise exactness, for every man has it now, word for word. Until the period of the coming of Christ, this was the only written revelation God had made to mankind.

The Old Testament was not all written at the same time. It was perhaps one thousand years from the writing of the five books of Moses to the end of the Prophets, about four hundred years before Christ. During this space the Old Testament was the Scriptures of the whole Jewish Church.

Then Judaism is the Old Testament, word for word. So far there can be no difference of opinion.

But then it is also true, that, although the religion before Christ was written and specific, yet it was not therefore well understood by everybody, nor by all alike.

At, and for some time before the coming of Christ, there existed among the Jews two or three little literary associations, or philosophical schools, sometimes called sects, which are previously described. Through the influence of these teachers, or otherwise, the religious mind of the Jews had been considerably corrupted on several important religious doctrines, so that to the extent of these errors they—some of them—misunderstood their own religion.

So that “*the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews, as written in the Old Testament,*” were one thing; while a *misunderstanding* of these doctrines and rites, by those who did misunderstand their religion, was quite another. In this respect the same state of things existed then as now. The revealed religion of mankind has been fixed since the Pentateuch was written, at least, though these or those men, in different times and different countries, have entertained a great variety of erroneous opinions in regard to religion.

As to the religion of Jews, since the apostolic age, being called Judaism, in the sense above described, that is out of the question. I mean by this, that we cannot suppose an intelligent writer to give the name of *Judaism* to the written religion of the Jews before Christ, and also to that of the Jews, so called, since that period. This would make a man call two different and antagonistic religions—as different and as antagonistic as any two religions *can be*—by the same name, and make them identical.

Nevertheless, in a mere literary sense, it is quite proper enough to call the religion of modern Jews by the name of *Judaism*. Any name is a correct name of any thing that is uniformly understood. But still, when we apply this word to the religion of the Church before Christ, and to that of the modern Jews, we mean—if we speak correctly—not only different but quite antagonistic things.

We will see a farther elucidation of this important point in a future chapter.

But beyond all question, the only proper meaning of the word *Judaism* is, as all the authors define it, the written system of religion of the Jews before the coming of Christ, exactly as it now stands in the Old Testament.

Modern Jews call their religion *Judaism*; and I have only to say, that if it embodies the religion of the Old Testament, then it follows necessarily that Christianity is apostasy from the true revealed religion. Modern Jews, so called, claim their religion to be Judaism only upon the ground that Jesus was an impostor. He was or he was not the Messiah of the Old Testament. If he was and is, then Christianity is true, and is identical with the religion of the Old Testament, and the religion of modern Jews is a *totally new* and *totally false* religion. But if Jesus was not the Messiah of the Old Testament, then it follows necessarily that Christianity is apostasy, and the religion

of modern Jews is true Judaism—that is, the true, and only true, revealed religion. True Judaism is now unquestionably found either in Christianity or in the religion of modern Jews, and to determine which one possesses it, you have only to determine whether Jesus is or is not the Christ. If he is, then Christianity is true Judaism; and if not, then the religion of modern Jews is true Judaism.

Before the time of Christ, we cannot possibly mistake as to what Judaism was; and since that time, it depends on the question above whether Jesus was the Christ. And as you determine that question, you determine which party is the true successor of the true ancient religion.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRUE SCRIPTURAL JUDAISM FARTHER CONSIDERED.

MR. WATSON, Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Judaism, says that "Judaism is the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews." And he farther says, that "a complete system of Judaism is contained in the books of the Old Testament." This I take to be precisely correct. But he then farther says: "Their religious worship and character, in our Saviour's time, had become formal and superstitious; and such it still continues to be, in a greater or less degree, at the present day."

This I am unable to understand. I can understand how many, or even all the Church, in the time of the Saviour, might have become "formal and superstitious." Whether the religious condition of the Church then would justify this sweeping remark, is a question we have already looked at; but I can plainly see how it might be so. But what does the learned author mean by the farther remark, "*and such it continues to be*"? What continues to be? He does not mean that the Church generally continues to be formal and superstitious. He evidently places the Jews, whose religion in the Saviour's time, as he says, was the Judaism he describes, and the Jews of the present day, in the same religious category! I can understand him in no other way. But this is a most transparent and palpable violation of the

well-known history in the case. You might as well attempt to place any two peoples, of different religions, in the same category. *No two religions are more dissimilar than that of the Jews in the Saviour's time and the religion of the Jews of the present day.*

The former was Christianity. If any man doubts this, let him look into his Bible and see. But I am sure that no theologian will question the proposition, that the religion of the Old Testament is essentially Christian. This written religion of the Old Testament is what Mr. Watson says is Judaism; and it is what I say, and what every one must say, is Judaism. But *that* is so far from being the religion of the Jews of the "present day," that modern Jews utterly repudiate every part of its religion. And it comes so near being the religion of present Christians, that Mr. Watson, and every other Christian, embraces every religious doctrine and sentiment it contains, and none others.

If any one doubts that the unbelieving Jews repudiated *all* the religion of the Old Testament, I ask him if they did not deny and repudiate the Christ of the Old Testament. And I then ask him, farther, if the Old Testament contains *any religion* after you wholly exclude Christ from it. And if any one doubts that the whole of the Christian's religion is contained in the Old Testament, I ask him to point out a doctrine of religion in the New Testament which is not contained in the Old.

I speak of Judaism as it *was*, and as Mr. Watson and everybody else describes it — the written and professed religion of the Church at that time. What errors these or those persons may have entertained respecting the written religion of the Church, is another question. It is readily conceded that many priests, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, did not understand and live up to, but greatly perverted their written faith. Perhaps that was as much the

case then as now. The professed religion of the Church was Christian, was right, and was true; that is, it was just as Christian, as right, and just as true as the Old Testament is now. It has not been altered. It was the religion of the Church then—it is the religion of the Church now.

Now, how can Mr. Watson place those people, professing this religion, in the same religious category with the Jews of the present day? It is true they are both called *Jews*, but names do not make things—they only denominate them.

The simple facts in the case, to state them briefly just here, are these:

First. At and before the birth of Christ, the entire Church acknowledged and claimed the written Scriptures—the Old Testament, just as we have it now—as their written faith. And, then as now, some—many—misconstrued some of the Scripture teachings; and to this extent *their* religious belief was defective. And also, then as now, a great many things—and among them some erroneous things—touching religion, not written, were believed; and of course the erroneous things believed produced errors in religious belief. It was not wrong to believe *traditions of the elders*. The question is, whether they were true or not. It was profitable to believe true traditions, and injurious to believe untrue ones.

Secondly. The doctrine of a coming Messiah was universal: none dissented. And the belief was pretty general that the time of his coming was then about at hand. Some of the people were pious—a majority were not.

Thirdly. At this time John the Baptist proclaimed, and “Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan” believed that the Messiah was *then* in their midst; and they were solemnly baptized with this belief.

Fourthly. And then a certain individual person was pointed out by John as *the veritable* Messiah; and he was

personally presented to thousands, if not millions, as the Messiah. And now, for the first time in the world, it became both *possible* and *necessary* for the faith of Christian men to attach, not generally to the doctrine of a Christ, but to a particular, identical person, as *the* Messiah of prophecy.

Fifthly. On this latter point—the identity of the person—the Church divided. Each man must of necessity, then as now, decide this question of the individual identity of the person. The man Jesus was or was not the Christ of their common religion. If he *was*, then it was stark, total apostasy from the universal faith of the Church to reject him. If he was *not*, then it was stark, total apostasy from the universal faith of the Church to receive him. Recognizing the truth that Jesus was the Christ, then it follows,

Sixthly. That all those Jews, be they many or few, either absolutely or relatively, who rejected Christ, *turned square away from the Church, apostatized wholly, not partially, from the common faith, and set up a new religion totally different from Judaism, and in the highest conceivable antagonism to it.*

Seventhly. And it farther follows, from the imperative and most simple laws of logic, that those Jews who received Christ, *remained firmly and exactly where they were in the Judaism of their fathers, and that of their own previous professions.* Some Jews remained in the Church, holding its faith firmly; and some, by rejecting Christ, apostatized from it.

Eighthly. From fortuitous, but very natural circumstances, those Jews who maintained their ancient faith by receiving Christ as the Saviour, were afterward called *Christians*, both they and their descendants who maintained the faith, together with all others who joined their communion, and their descendants, ecclesiastically, to this day. And the rejecting Jews have likewise maintained their apostasy with most wonderful pertinacity. They and their descendants have, since that time, been called *Jews*.

Now, how can Mr. Watson—I need not speak of Mr. Watson particularly: I merely quoted him for a text to this chapter: I could have quoted the same thing from many others—how can he, I say, speak of the religion of the “Jews” at the coming of Christ, and say of them and of the “Jews” of the present day, conjointly, that *their* religious worship and character in our Saviour’s time had become formal and superstitious; and such *it still continues* to be, in a greater or less degree, at the present time?

If you apply the statement to the facts of history, it has no meaning. It is indeed marvelous that the notion has become so common, that the religion of “the Jews” at and before the birth of Christ, and that of “the Jews” of later days, *continued to be the same*. The truth is, there are no two religions known to history in higher hostility to each other. The former was and is wholly Christian, and the latter is in the highest hostility thereto.

Mr. Watson places in the same category, and speaks indifferently and interchangeably of, two things as different and as highly hostile to each other as any two things can be.

Let the reader bear in mind, and hold me responsible, that my affirmation is, that the rejecting Jews apostatized *wholly and finally* from their former faith, and that of their fathers, and their Church.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RELIGION OF POST-MESSIANIC, OR MODERN JEWS,
FARTHER EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

THE relation of modern Jews to Christianity deserves to be looked at a few paragraphs farther. By Christianity I mean *true religion*, in any age, or any country. I understand this to be the only religion revealed by God to man, and hence, the only true religion. All other religions are the inventions of men. If John the Baptist, and Isaiah, and Daniel, and David, and Abraham, and Noah, and Abel, were not Christians, then they were idolaters, or deists, or the followers of some other man-made, false religion. How well informed these men were respectively, in the theory and doctrines of their religion, is the same kind of a question, applied to them, as to any Christians living now, or at any other time; or what degrees of personal piety were enjoyed by any particular persons, in any former ages of the world, before or after Christ, is the same kind of a question as if applied to living Christians. Many unsaved persons, in any period, subscribe nominally to the true religion, and are found in external association with the pious.

Leaving out, then, the question of personal piety, which alone is the condition of salvation, no matter how wise or how ignorant any one may be, of what we call religious doctrines, we are prepared to distinguish between those

holding a true and those holding a false religion. Christians hold a true faith—all other religion is false.

• We conclude, then, that the entire Jewish people, before the time of Christ, had a true religious faith, nominally, at least, because they professed the revealed religion. They subscribed to the Old Testament, *verbatim*; and everybody knows, or ought to know, that these writings embody substantially and essentially the Christian faith. Christ was, and is, in these books, in precisely the same sense as he is now in the four books commonly called the Gospels. Exclude Christ from the Old Testament, and, I ask, what have you left? You have the same left as you have if you take the life of a man from a man—you have the husk left; you have the ink and paper left; and you have some written historic facts; and you have also some wholesome rules, which might be advantageously employed in social morals; but you have no more of a revealed system of *religion* left than you have in an almanac or a nautical chart. A system of religion with Christ excluded is, at least, a flat contradiction.

The Jews, then, before Christ, had a true religious faith. They believed in Christ—of course, the Christ then in prospect. And now, what occurred in the course of the history of this system of religion? Why, the great event to which all looked forward, occurred; the looked-for Christ made his appearance. But this introduces no new principles of religion; it merely sustains the established principles. The coming of an eclipse vindicates the principle and the truth of the calculation; while, to repudiate the fact, would also deny the system of Astronomy, which pointed to it. Just so of the Christ of the Hebrew Scriptures. Failing to receive him, is to turn away from that faith; to believe in him, does not impose any new belief; it only requires a continuance in that which is already believed. To refuse to

receive Christ then, was the same kind of an act of apostasy as it would be to repudiate him now.

The idea, then, that modern Jews have the same religion as the Old Testament Jews, is to suppose that, to repudiate a system utterly, is the same as to adhere to it.

But it might be asked: Do modern Jews not believe in the law of the Old Testament, in Moses, in Abraham, and in the prophets? And the answer is, that *most certainly they believe in nothing of the sort*; they believe in a "law" which excludes all divine authority and sanctions; they believe in an historic person called Abraham, without the connection with Christ which makes the scriptural Abraham what he is; they believe in a supposed Moses, entirely separated from Christ, which alone gives the Moses of Scripture the position and character he has; and they believe in prophets, or rather, the *names* of prophets, but so utterly separated from all the characteristics of the prophets of Scripture, as renders them entirely different characters. And so they believe in Abraham, and use his name in their deistical worship; but their Abraham has no other relation to the Abraham of Scripture than the mere similarity in name—the two words sound alike.

And they may also use certain external forms and manipulations, and words, in worship, which were used by the ancient Jews; but these things prove only that they take some of their religious *history* from the Bible; but it proves nothing about their *religion*. Any number of systems of false religion could easily be made, having interwoven among them many of the *names*, much of the *history* and external *actions* of the ancient Jews.

The religion of the ancient Jews had one, and but one vital, central idea connected with it; that vital, central idea was as well understood in any one of the many different ages of the world as it was understood at any other time;

it is tolerably well understood now, and has been for many years. That idea is, the atoning Saviour of mankind—the Christ of prophecy. The man whose faith centers there, has the religion of the ancient Jews, and of the persons, since Christ, who are called Christians. Any other faith is totally antagonistic thereto. Where Christ—the identical, personal Christ—is wholly rejected, the antagonism to the revealed religion is complete.

As before stated, the Old Testament Scriptures, *with Christ excluded*, is no more a system of *religion* than is the Koran or the Mormon Bible. If a man were to set up a new system of religion, in opposition to Christianity, it would save him some labor and ingenuity to adopt the Old or New Testament—that is, its forms and verbiage, *with Christ excluded*—and the work is well done. This is the *religion* of modern Jews.

It does not for a moment abate a whit of this argument to suppose that those rejecting or apostatizing Jews, in so doing, believed they were following the old, true faith. That is very possible. Apostasy is one thing; how any particular person comes to apostatize, is another. The question is not what they thought about it; the question is, what they did. It may reasonably be presumed that all apostates, or other irreligious persons, persuade themselves that they are following the truth. These rejecting Jews *did* apostatize most certainly.

They substitute a new, false, future, supposed Christ, for the Christ of their Scriptures, and of their former faith. Nor does their nominal holding to the Old Testament, or part of it, relieve the difficulty in the least. With their perversions, their meaning, and their use of the books of the Old Testament, they are no longer Scriptures, but a jumble of infidelity.

I take no pleasure in applying the term *deist* to modern

Jews. I have no fancy for mere names. I am aware of the difficulty of defining what a deist is. I wish only to define modern Judaism, and show its real relation to the religion of the Bible, and to the ancient Jews.

It is not by any means true that modern Jews believe either in the Old Testament, or in the God of heaven. Every deist and idolater will tell you he believes in God; and so he does believe in something he calls God, though it be the sun, or the world, or any other false god. The question whether a man does or does not believe in God—the God of the Bible—is the question whether he does or does not believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, as set forth in the Old Testament, and also in the New. “Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” “And that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent.” A god out of Christ, is an idolatrous god. Christianity being true, there *is* and *can be* no other God than Jehovah, *as seen and believed in through Christ*. Revelation—Old Testament or New—knows no other God than God in Christ. Christ is God made manifest to us.

It is idle, then, to suppose that Jews, more than any one else repudiating Jesus Christ, believe in God. It is a contradiction. They believe in a false, imaginary god, utterly unknown to any part of Scripture. This may be said of all deists and idolaters.

Mistaken Christians, as Unitarians, for instance, stand upon very different ground. They believe in Christ, though they may be more or less mistaken as to these or those peculiarities in his character. They may make very great errors without repudiating him wholly.

It is admitted by all, as matter of fact, that the Old Testament—all through it—speaks of some one identical, individual person, distinguished from all others in the universe, as a divine or Emmanuel person, a person to mediate

between God and man; sustaining some wonderful, and even inexplicable, relation to the Deity, as well as to mankind, in some peculiarity. Now, there are, and have been always heretofore, some diversity of opinion with regard to the exact relationship of this person to Jehovah, and also to mankind; and there are no doubt here, among Christians, many errors—some very great ones. That is one thing. They all believe that the man Jesus was that person. But to deny utterly the identity of the Christ of the Old Testament, with Jesus of Nazareth, and declare the former to be an entirely different person, one who will come into the world at some future time—that is an entirely different thing. *That* is what I mean by deism.

The former is an error in Christianity; the latter is an utter repudiation of every idea of divinity contained in the Old Testament; for every idea of Deity in the Old Testament is inherent in, and inseparable from, its Christ. And so, supposing Christianity to be true, this person of the Old Testament is inherent in, and inseparable from, Jesus of Nazareth. To repudiate the one, necessarily repudiates the other, whether the unbeliever *says* so or not.

And it follows also, necessarily, that—supposing Jesus to be the Christ, he being set forth in the Old Testament as the sole object of all religious faith, and the exclusive foundation of all religious hope—to repudiate him, necessarily repudiates every religious principle the Old Testament claims to inculcate. The greater includes the less—the whole includes the parts.

It is therefore simply impossible that any person *can* get farther from the Old Testament, in any and every direction—call it deism or what you will—than the modern Jew.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHAT BECAME OF THE JEWISH CHURCH, AND WHERE IS
IT NOW?

To answer this question intelligibly, we must first determine precisely what we mean by *the Jewish Church*. Let that idea be first distinctly defined.

Without attempting to trace the history of religion, in its living professions, into remote antiquity, which is not necessary for our present purpose, we note the existence of what is commonly called the Church at any time before the period of Christ—say at the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, about six hundred years before Christ.

We find here what we commonly call a Church. They have their Bible, their membership, their faith, forms of worship, terms of initiation, government, etc. Some of the members are pious, and, as is the case now, some are not; some understand their Bible and theory of faith but poorly, and some better.

At this particular time, from various causes, the Church had become reduced in numbers greatly indeed, so that it counted, according to the best authorities, something under forty-three thousand souls. But, large or small, there it was, a distinct, visible community.

And as some died, others came in in two different ways.

First, the children of the members, who did not fail to be initiated, and be kept in the Church; and secondly, all persons from without were always invited in; and at times many came in, and their children mixed with the mass; and so the association not only continued, but increased—so much so, that by the time of Christ it numbered perhaps six or seven millions.

And at the time of Christ a very large number left the Church, as we have seen, because they would not believe that Jesus was the Christ.

Of the condition of the Church at this period we have already spoken, and shall have occasion to allude to it hereafter. They all professed the written religion of the Old Testament, though many but poorly understood it. The great mass of people, being unable to read, were subject to the incorrect teachings of others. Still they held their regular Sabbath-day worship, very much as it is seen with us now.

Those of them who did not follow the apostasy of the unbelievers, simply remained where they were, professing the same religion of the same Scriptures handed down by the Church from remote ages.

And what became of the rule by which children born into the Church became members of it by being personally initiated into it by their parents?

The rule continued intact, and is the rule now, without change or variation. The rule now is, that all children be dedicated to God and the Church; and if some or many neglect this, that does not change the rule. We sometimes hear it said that it is the duty of *believing* parents to do this; but I can see no difference. The neglect of one duty cannot relieve a person from the obligation of another. I confess it might not be expected that the people who had never heard of revealed religion should do their duty to

their children; but still, religious duty is absolutely universal to mankind.

But it is suggested, perhaps, that the Church now, in the strictest and most proper sense, consists of truly pious persons, though they are in outward association with others who believe historically and philosophically the revealed religion, but who are nevertheless not truly converted and pious.

Yes, and in these respects it is now about as it always was. In the Jewish Church, as we call it, there were those who were pious; and secondly, those who believed theoretically and performed the external duties of religion, but were not truly converted. And in the third place, there were those who believed in the religion of the Church generally or nominally, and so were not idolaters, though they were not, by personal initiation and recognition, members of the Church.

Of this last class, I remark that it is the mistake of some who suppose that *all* the descendants of the Jewish people continued to be Jews; that is, were initiated members of the Church. This was the *rule*, then as now, that all should keep their children in the Church, and keep themselves in; but it was formerly, as it is now, that many did neither. In many ways, many descendants of members of the Church got out of the Church; and their children stayed out or came in as the case chanced to be. There were always as many ways to get out of the Church as there are now; nor was it ever any more difficult to stay out than it is now.

We speak, therefore, of the *Church* before the time of Christ just as we would now, and we use the word in this sense or in that as we do now.

Then, what became of the Church as it existed at and before the time of Christ? It continued—simply continued.

That is all. It suffered neither change, interregnum, nor dismemberment. It suffered the loss of a very large number of its members by the defection about Jesus, but it continued, and is here now.

The Jewish Church unquestionably existed in complete ecclesiastical entireness at and during the ministry of the Lord; and it simply *continued to exist*. It never dissolved—it never suffered molestation—it was never spoken against by Christ, his followers or friends. The personal membership of the Saviour and the apostles in it was fully recognized during the whole of all of their lives. No dream of any *new* or any *other* Church was ever entertained by Christ, or any of his friends. The human aspects of the Church—that is, its government, its visible modes of worship, etc.—were never objected against by anybody in those times, so far as we have any information.

As before, and as will be hereafter more fully explained, the *unbelieving*, or *rejecting* portion of the Jews, by rejecting Christ, of course ceased to worship in fellowship with those who received and acknowledged Christ; and so by this very act *they* left the Church. *That* was leaving the Church. I know very well that they continued the same *forms* of external worship as were common to both parties previously; but having abandoned the *religion* of the Church wholly and entirely as they did—not partially—and having set up a system of antichristian deism, they adopted a totally new religion, it cannot be said that they continued to be the Church. You cannot separate the *Church* from the *religion* of the Church. That party which continued the same religious faith, and especially where they continued generally the same forms of worship, of course must be regarded as continuing the Church in preference to those who abandoned the faith of the Church wholly, though they may also have maintained gen-

erally, or even exactly, the same *outward forms* of worship. Thus, when a part of the Church rose up against the *religion* of the Church, assailing and abandoning it, repudiating its very Christ and great Author, as did the rejecting Jews, the Church itself—that is, that portion of it which remained firm, receiving their Saviour—stood up well against this internal opposition. It not only did not suffer dismemberment, but, however much individuals may have suffered persecution, the Church was never jostled in the slightest degree. Nor has it been jostled to this day.

The Hebrew Church, as the Church prior to the coming of Christ is usually and very naturally called, being the true Church, was not changed for another, as some vainly imagine. It was not changed, because change could not improve it, if for no other reason, because that which is *true* cannot be improved by change. Another Church, different from that written in and existing under the Old Testament, would have been as novel and as heretical as another Christ.

The Church of Abraham, of Moses, and the prophets, was most certainly the Church of the true Christ. This is declared with certainty all through the Scriptures. And the question, whether it was identical with the Church afterward called Christian, is the question whether the Christ of the latter was the true Christ. Assuming that Jesus was the Christ, is the same as to affirm the identity of the Church in the periods before and after his coming.

In the sixth of Acts we are told, that when the number of the disciples was multiplied—that is, when great numbers of the members of the Church had acknowledged Jesus as Christ—there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Now who were these “Grecians” and “Hebrews?” They were two of the well-known de-

nominations of the Church for hundreds of years. Those in Palestine, and in and near about Jerusalem, were commonly called Hebrews; while those at a greater distance, and in foreign countries, were called Grecians, or Hellenistic Jews. Here we see the same old Church that had always existed.

And it must be observed, that this personal adherence to Christ—this increase of personal discipleship, one by one, of the then existing members of the Church, had nothing ecclesiastical about it—that is, there was no going out nor going into any Church about it. It was a thing naturally necessary in the Church, and by the members thereof from the very nature of the case. They all believed the *doctrine of Christ*, but no one could, until now, believe that *Jesus* was Christ. Now, *this* becomes vitally and naturally necessary.

This point is highly important, and must be kept in view. The embracing of Christ, following and believing in him, was by no means a new doctrine, but an old one. It was the old, central and fundamental doctrine of the Church. But this particular phase of it must necessarily be new, viz., the recognition of *Jesus* as the Christ. That phase of the question never could have been even considered before. And of course all the pious Jews, those who read and understood the Scriptures properly, and who otherwise followed the dictates of true piety, all those received Christ, as did also many others who from time time to time, on the celebrated day of Pentecost, and at other times, became pious.

Burkitt, in his Notes on the third of Matthew, says of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who came to John and were baptized, "It was matter of wonder and admiration to see such men turn proselytes."

I marvel at such an expression by a theologian! The

learned commentator certainly does not mean what he says. And yet I acknowledge you will find the same error substantially in the works of many other authors of distinction.

Turn proselytes! From what, and to what, were they proselyted? All we know of them is, that now, at the first time when in the nature of things it was practicable, they outwardly and plainly acknowledged and subscribed to a tenet, or rather a fact, of their own religion. They acknowledged the *personal presence* of their own Christ, according to their own faith, because now, for the first time, he was present. Is that being proselyted?

Persons out of the Church, and holding an untrue faith, are, or ought to be, proselyted into both. But persons already *in* the Church, and professing the revealed religion, to what are they proselyted?

Those who went to John's baptism did not *turn proselytes*, most assuredly, though it is highly probable, in many, if not in most cases, they became greatly revived in religion, and much enlightened in the principles of the faith they already professed. And I do not see any cause of wonder in this. The wonder with me is, that religious, or nominally religious men, both then and now, do not revive and increase in religious knowledge and piety more than they do.

The Pharisees and Sadducees no doubt now, by confession and repentance, became convinced of some hurtful errors, became revived in their religion, and awakened to the great fact that the Saviour had come. But certainly these things did not touch their ecclesiastical relationship, nor their faith in the revealed Scriptures.

I have now before me a treatise on the *Church*, by the Rev. Josephus Anderson, of Florida, a gentleman said to be a Methodist minister of standing, and a man of fair attain-

ments. He disposes of the Jewish Church in a manner sufficiently summary, at least, as follows: "The Jewish Church was abandoned and forsaken of God."

Mr. Anderson says that a Church may cease to be a Church of God; that God threatened the Church of Laodicea with a similar fate to that which he visited upon the Jewish Church. He is mistaken. In the first place, the Churches in the two cases are very dissimilar things. The Church at Laodicea was a mere society or local neighborhood branch of the Church, which might be easily displaced without affecting the Church; but for God to abandon and forsake "the Jewish Church," would be to abandon and forsake the entire religious system of mankind, and annihilate the religion of the world.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE PERIODS BEFORE
AND SINCE THE TIME OF CHRIST.

IN common parlance, we speak of the Jewish and Christian Churches as different things; and the question is worth looking into a moment. In what respects are they different? and in what respects are they identical?

We may very properly speak of the Church in any two periods as separate and distinct as to those periods; or, different periods of the Church may be distinguished and spoken of respectively in many other respects. But there could not be *two Churches*, either cotemporary or in different periods, unless there could be two entirely different religions; because *Church* means nothing more nor less than the *association* of religious persons, or persons professing the religion of the Bible.

The notion that there may have been two Churches—true, divine Churches—grows out of the erroneous supposition that the Church is a mere positive institution; that is, that the Church is first formed, with positive laws, and then people are invited into it.

One difficulty with such a supposition is, that no such formation ever took place in the world as a matter of historic fact. No Church was ever organized—Jewish or Christian—by positive enactments, at any time and place, with or with-

out Divine authority. The Church comes into being in a totally different way.

Religious people—from the very nature of religion—*associate*; that is, they associate religiously, by meeting together for religious promotion; and hence, they need rules of association; and so, the Church is the natural result. Religion is not the product of the Church: the Church is the product of religion, though they co-work and promote each other. And hence, the Church becomes the unavoidable and necessary result of religion wherever it exists, without any outside, special agency, or direct means or effort to make it. The Church, therefore, comes about of itself. Religion and Church are necessary concomitants of each other; it is impossible to suppose the one without supposing the other. Religion, from its very social nature—love to God and to the brethren—and this brotherly goodwill and affection being exceedingly social and reciprocal—cannot exist in the absence of that kind and degree of association which we call Church. Religion brings its votaries *together* for mutual good. The law of its gravitation is as universal as that of any other gravitation. Religion is coherent, cohesive, attracting, adhesive; it is mutual, reciprocal, and transcendently social; mutual attraction is its central power.

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” 1 John iii. 14.

But the Church is never the same in any two periods, in every respect. The Church previously, and during and after the bondage in Egypt, must have been different, in many important respects; and yet no one will pretend that the one ceased to be, and another arose, in these changes. And again, after the Israelites left Mount Sinai, important changes took place in Church affairs; and also at the

entrance into Palestine; and later, when the Jews were carried into Babylon, and at many other periods, very great changes took place in the external matters and manners of the Church; but these changes did not affect the continued identity of the Church.

On some of these occasions the Church suffered more change in external things than at the time of Christ; but they had nothing to do with the identity of the Church. There was never a time when there were not persons professing the revealed religion; and so there was not a time when religious association did not exist. And so *the Church* continued uninterruptedly. The refusal of a great number of Jews at the time of Christ to receive him as the Saviour, and their consequent apostasy, did not, in the slightest degree, affect the being of the Church.

Mr. Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Church, makes the following very judicious remarks: "Hence we may learn that at the coming of the Messiah, there was not one Church taken away and another set up in its room; but the Church continued the same in those that were the children of Abraham according to the faith. It is common with divines to speak of the Jewish and Christian Churches as though they were two distinct and totally different things; but that is not a correct view of the matter. The Christian Church is not another Church, but the very same that was before the coming of Christ; having the same faith in it, and interested in the same covenant. Great alterations, indeed, were made in the outward state and condition of the Church, by the coming of the Messiah."

But then—by the way—how can Mr. Watson, after writing the above, place the *Jews*, who composed the Church before Christ, in the same religious and ecclesiastical category with the modern or rejecting *Jews*? See our quotation from him in Chapter XVI. If the Church continued

straightforward, uninterruptedly, and is the *same* now it formerly was, then that is the same as to say that those who rejected Christ—he being the Head of the Church—*left the Church*. They did not leave the new Christian Church, for there was no such *new* Church: they left the Church they were in; and it is notorious they stay out of it and oppose it still. The Jews—be they many or few—who remained in their former position, according to Watson as above, continued to be the Church; and all who have joined with them still so continue. And so, if Mr. Watson is right in the one case—as he most certainly is—then he is wrong in the other.

Thus we conclude that *the Jewish Church*, and the *Christian Church*, are not in any sense two Churches; but there are merely two chronological periods of the Church. Two different Churches with one divinely-prescribed religion, is an absurdity, and can be supposed only by an entirely erroneous idea of what is meant by *Church*.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCERNING THE SACRAMENTS, AND THE CHANGES IN THE
MODES OF ADMINISTERING THEM WHICH BECAME NECES-
SARY AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

IN the very nature of religion, there seem to be two sacraments naturally called for. This is so, because human religion possesses a twofold aspect in the mind and experience of men. These two aspects might be called personal and social. First, religion has to do with the direct and immediate relation between the individual man and his Maker: irrespective of other considerations, man owes personal fealty to God. Secondly, man is not only an individual, with the personal obligation, but, as an integral part of the social community, he is his brother's keeper, and is therefore under an obligation, in the direction of the multitude around him, to make them religious too. The former might be called the *personal*, and the latter the *social*, obligation; or, the one is *initiatory*, and the other *commemorative*.

Now, what is sacrament? Sacrament means obligation—by common usage, religious obligation exclusively. I insist that we do not need a spy-glass to look at a thing which lies just before our eyes.

But an obligation—any kind of obligation—is one thing, and the external manner in which you fix, seal, and make

patent the promise or undertaking to perform the obligation, is another and different thing. And those writers who have failed to make and explain this distinction, have failed to give us a rational idea of the sacraments. The obligation itself is one thing; but the external manner in which you administer the obligation—that is, the outward promise to perform the obligation—is another thing.

If I owe a man one hundred dollars, the obligation to remunerate exists; but the giving of the bond acknowledges the obligation and makes it patent. The rite of marriage administers and fixes a previously existing obligation. An oath seals or fixes an obligation. In brief parlance, we call a promissory note an obligation. Strictly, it is only the ceremony or manner in which the obligation was acknowledged. A conveyance of land is first made, and then the formula of a deed, acknowledgment, etc., fixes and makes patent the obligation so existing.

And so Mr. Watson well explains that, “The Latin word *sacramentum*, in its largest sense, may signify a sacred ceremony, and is the appellation also of the military oath of fidelity taken by the Roman soldiers.” Sacrament means obligation. Religion has, naturally, two obligations, or a twofold obligation: the personal and the social—the initiatory and the commemorative—as above explained. These obligations, or sacraments, like all other human obligations of a high and solemn character, are acknowledged by appropriate and significant rites, actions, or ceremonies.

Those which religion naturally imposes—first, to be personally loyal and obedient to God; and secondly, to let your religious light shine for the mutual advantage of the entire community of man—are of course not peculiar or confined to any particular age, period, or country—belong no more to the period since than before the personal appearance of Christ. The sacraments, then, are common to all periods

and all possible conditions and circumstances of living men. But it does not thence, by any means, follow that the mode of administering the sacraments must be always the same. Indeed, a little reflection will show any one that this could not be the same before and after Christ's human life and death.

There are certain external religious actions which we call ritual, and which are used in teaching and inculcating religious truths and doctrines, which must necessarily be changed on the coming of Christ. These changes do not rest upon any mere arbitrary command, or ordinance, but upon the nature of things. Before that occurrence, every thing that was done was done *before* Christ was seen, and so pointed forward to the great facts of his life and death. Afterward, every thing was *after* these things, and so points to them retrospectively. The faith of religion in the one case, to be the same always, requires confidence in something that would be; and in the other, in something that has been.

And so some ritual customs and modes, exceedingly useful and appropriate before Christ's appearance, would be inappropriate, and even absurd, afterward. Christ was the very same Saviour in both periods—stood always in the same relation to sinners, and saved men; while in the one case his great atoning acts were in the future, and in the other they were in the past.

See, then, how wisely the modes of administering the sacraments were arranged before Christ's appearance, and how aptly they answered to man's nature and circumstances, while the sacraments themselves simply continued—passing smoothly along down the Church through the period of the Saviour's life and death, and now being administered by such other ritual acts as still commend themselves to both our conscience and our reason.

Baptism.—The nature of man on the one hand, and of religion on the other, are such that, in order to the growth and prosperity of the latter, it is necessary for its professors to be distinguished from others by some certain, well-understood mark of separation, which they themselves will readily recognize.

To this it may be answered, that there is nothing essentially religious in such badges and tokens. That may be very true; and yet it is just as true that neither is there any thing essentially religious in a Sabbath-day, in hours of worship, preaching religion, nor in a printed Bible, or other books. But these things are all great, subsidiary helps.

A very good way to test the value of any thing is, to suppose its entire absence. Then suppose the absence of the sacrament called circumcision, with nothing to take its place, from among the Israelites. In this respect alone, looking no farther, circumcision must have been a great religious advantage to the Jewish people.

But it answered another important end. Religion now, and for centuries past, is much interested in the religious *history* of the early Jews. The truth of this history—its rites, covenants, prophecies, and adumbrations—have much to do with religion now, and at every other period, past and future. It is in the highest degree useful, if not necessary, for religion at all times to have at hand some well-authenticated historic certificate by which its antiquity and the agency of God in its establishment may be asserted and tested. Circumcision is that certificate. It was always at hand, and always spoke historically on these points, in language not to be mistaken. It was always both commemorative and adumbrant of other religious facts. At any historic period it fixes, without the possibility of error, its own history and antiquity. Circumcision *must* date back

to its supposed origin ; or, if introduced into the Church at a later period, the people of that age would know it was introduced then, and could therefore commemorate nothing beyond that period. And so the absence of any historical knowledge of a later introduction is the most certain evidence there can be that it was introduced when and as it purports to have been.

The simple fact of the existence of the Lord's Supper, as we see it now, is, when taken in connection with the absence of any history of its introduction at a period later than is asserted, the most conclusive proof there *can be* that it was used by Christ at the time and for the purposes stated. Nay, more : there is no other testimony that could be viewed by the human understanding which could demonstrate that fact beyond question. If the lives of individual persons had been miraculously preserved from that day to this, their testimony might be doubted ; but the evidence produced by a concurrence of circumstances cannot be doubted. Where there is no art, there can be no falsehood.

And again, in the third place, sacrament means obligation ; and so the person submitting to circumcision, thereby seals a promise to God and the Church to carry out and observe all the things implied in Church-membership. Every Jew was under this obligation, and the rite was the seal of the same, binding him to be true to the faith.

These were the three principal things which made up the meaning and end of this sacrament. Any particular form was, perhaps, not strictly necessary, but something to answer these natural demands was necessary. One of the most necessary things about the form of its administration was, that it should be fixed, permanent, and not subject to alteration or change.

And now, it may be inquired, if the sacrament of circumcision be thus necessary, in the very nature of religion,

without reference to countries, times, or circumstances, why did it not continue after Christ?

The sacrament of initiation did continue uninterruptedly. It was not circumcision which was necessary, but the sacrament of which circumcision was the outward performance. Nothing was changed but the *form* of administering the sacrament, and this was done for most obvious and necessary reasons.

The particular form in which this sacrament was administered *before* the coming of Christ, had peculiar significancy and appropriateness to that period; but after that time—or rather, after that event—it would have been not only meaningless, but absurd and impossible.

All the forms of worship that could be so adopted, *before* Christ's coming, were adumbrant—foreshadowing, of that great event, as these afterward were commemorative of the same thing. And these things had reference, not only to the event itself, but were illustrative of some of the leading characteristics of the event; and hence its painful and bloody character. It looked *forward*, and taught the Jew what we afterward saw. So it would have been not only without meaning, but without truth, afterward. St. Paul repeatedly explains this in his Epistles to the Galatians, the Romans, and elsewhere.

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.” Gal. v. 2, 3.

These observations of the Apostle *are an exposition of the Old Testament doctrines and teachings on the subject of circumcision*; so that however well or however ill any one may have understood the Old Testament text on this point, this authoritative exegesis opens out its doctrine to us, and shows that that mode of administering the sacrament of

initiation *was* confined to that period of the Church. If we did not know it before, we know it now; if any one misread the Old Testament on this subject before, there is no excuse for doing it longer, because here we have an authoritative exposition of what it does mean.

What particular traits of the work or character of Christ circumcision pointed to or illustrated, may be questions on which men might differ; but that it pointed the worshiper *forward* to the Saviour's coming and work, and therefore must cease, by virtue of its own inherent nature and constitution, on the occurrence of these events, is, after this and other explanations, no longer an open question.

It is certain that the sacrament of initiation before Christ was administered by the rite of circumcision, and that the same sacrament was by Christ administered, and commanded ever after to be administered, by what we call baptism. Then, if we had no other means of exegesis—supposing Christ to be infallible authority—the Christ—we now know that circumcision *was* confined to that period of the Church. Therefore, it follows, as Mr. Watson says, that to continue it, is a clearly implied denial that Jesus was the Christ, the expected seed of Abraham. Or, in other words, to reverse the proposition—supposing Jesus to be the Christ, it follows, that the circumcising mode of administering the initiating sacrament *was certainly*, by the law of the Old Testament, confined to the period before Christ. The infallible teachers—Christ and the apostles—so explain the law, and I accept their construction of it.

I have not seen the irregular circumcision of Timothy satisfactorily explained. There were some local reasons for it, in Paul's judgment, which are now quite beyond our reach; and if we had them, they would likely prove quite unimportant. Very likely it was to meet some local prejudices. But it was not *the sacrament* which was thus administered

by circumcision. Timothy must undoubtedly have been baptized long before this; and Paul could not have administered this sacrament twice. The mere external act was performed, not the sacrament.

Now, in what form must this sacrament be administered *after* Christ? The nature of religion does not point out any particular form as necessary, though it plainly indicates some things on the subject. The form would undoubtedly be fixed and unchangeable, for there is nothing in the nature of things which could admit of a *change* in this particular, save the *coming*, the personal appearance of Messiah; and of course it must be either prospective or retrospective of that event.

Among many possible ones, one particular form was adopted. Its significance, naturalness, and appropriateness are apparent. It symbolizes some of the most important truths of religion. I do not see the force of those arguments which go to prove that the form of the ceremony used in baptism is peculiarly and strikingly *commemorative*. It seems to me—supposing, of course, that you have one changeless form—that any one of many supposable ones would be well suited to commemorate Christ. I find the value of this particular use of water in its appropriate symbolic teachings.

And in adopting this form, the Saviour did not introduce a new thing, before quite unknown in religious worship; but without making any striking innovation, he caused the obviously necessary and natural thing implied in circumcision to vary and modify itself into what has since been called baptism. The name *baptism* was given to it, like that of many other descriptive nouns, merely incidentally, being derived from the material used; but as in all similar instances, it soon came to be employed to mean the thing—that is, the sacrament itself.

The two things are but one thing; that is, they are two different modes of administering a sacrament, or religious obligation. Before Christ, the form was adapted to, and significant of, that condition of the Church; after that, the form must needs be changed, and it was changed, to meet a post-Messianic state of the Church. Baptism—that is, the sacrament—is exactly what circumcision *was*. They are not two things, the one succeeding the other; they are one and the same identical thing. Marriage is the same thing, the same obligation performed in this kind of ceremony or in that. There are several modes of administering the obligation of an oath, but the obligation is always the same.

It is not true, therefore, that the sacrament of baptism succeeds to that of circumcision, as is oftentimes taught. The sacrament remained unchanged and unchangeably the same. The external mode of administering the sacrament, and that only, was changed.

The term “instituted” is frequently used in describing the origin of this sacrament in the present form; but those who do so, generally show and teach substantially, or ought to do so, that they use it in a diluted and modified sense. The form of administering was new, not the sacrament.

Mr. Watson says: “That our Lord instituted such an ordinance as baptism, is plain from the commission given to the apostles after his resurrection, and recorded in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.”

That depends upon what he means by “instituted.” The quotation from Matthew proves that our Lord recognized and established the obligation of fealty to God, of initiation into the Church of God, in that form; and it is well known that in that form it was new in the Church; but it does not prove that he then originated, founded, set up anew, the sacrament itself. The former he did—the latter he did not do. The sacrament—that is, the sacred obligation—is one

thing; the outward *form* of its administration is another. And so I conclude that the sacrament implied, meant, intended, and solemnized by baptism, was not a new thing at the time of Christ, but is an old thing, as old as the Church. The form of the ceremony must be changed, of necessity, for the reason that before Christ it pointed *forward* to his future coming, while afterward it must point *backward* to the past event.

The Lord's Supper.—And the same course of reasoning meets the case in this sacrament also. The sacrament itself is at least as old as the deliverance from the bondage in Egypt. The history of the Egyptian bondage, and deliverance therefrom, are highly significant and emblematic, not of these people, but of religion. The feast of *Passover* is full of reason, naturalness, and significancy. Religion is deliverance, protection, safety; and at the same time that the passover itself taught lessons of discipline, dependence, and confidence in God, it conducted the mind from primary teaching to ripe scholarship in religion, and illustrated the great principles of God's dealings with man.

In the smiting judgments which God visited on that wicked land, he *passed over* the dwellings of the Israelites, sparing them, and giving them divine protection. This is the substance of religion. But in order for this to make the proper impression, the people must see, understand, and appreciate it; and they must also coöperate with God in it.

Now, taking men naturally as we find them, how is this to be done? The sparing of the first-born, and the actual deliverance from Egyptian bondage, were blessings conferred on the smallest fraction of the whole Israelitish race. It was done only to those who then lived. In a single generation afterward, there were none living upon whom these blessings were directly conferred.

There is no way conceivable to human reason, by which these great historic facts could be made to produce their proper and desired effect upon the entire Israelitish mind, so as to bring the hearts and sense of the people into coöperation with God in these teachings, but by *perpetual commemoration*. Hence, they were commanded to celebrate this deliverance by a feast of commemoration, of perpetual recurrence. By this means, the thing itself, though it occurred one hundred years ago, and now five hundred, and now one thousand years ago, was kept fresh in the memory of all, producing all the quick stimulant of recent occurrence.

And at the same time that it did this immediately, objectively it reached forward by pre-representation, carrying the minds of those who understood it away into the future, and teaching the more teachable the great deliverance itself, which is the substance of all theology.

The Israelitish passover was in the highest sense a sacrament. The ceremony of its observance was divinely prescribed, and the solemn obligation and acknowledgment were continuously renewed. In renewing this obligation of fidelity to God, the Israelite ate the paschal lamb and unleavened bread in solemn token of the deliverance past, and in religious anticipation of the infinitely greater thing which this signified.

Thus things went on until Christ came. And what now is to be done? The sacrament must be continued, or religion must lose one of its great twin characteristics. It can have in its present form no specific commemorative tie binding the individual Christian to his Saviour. It commemorates the deliverance from the bondage in Egypt. Of necessity, therefore, there must be some changes in it, or it becomes both meaningless and absurd. These obviously necessary changes are the following:

First. Something must be substituted in the place of the *paschal lamb*, for that *pre-represented* Christ. It looked forward to the shedding of Christ's blood, and now that *has been shed*.

Secondly. The great deliverance by Christ, so long *anticipated* in every act of worship, must now, of necessity, be celebrated, if religious worship be continued at all, as a thing held in remembrance. It is now behind you, and you must so represent it in your acts of worship, or those acts are without meaning.

The *name* of the sacrament became changed at this time, like that of baptism, Church, etc., by mere adventitious circumstances. The feast, as celebrated by Jews at this period, had, by custom, become a *supper*, the evening meal being the principal meal in that country in those days. A feast, instead of being a *dining*, as with us, was a supper; and nothing is more natural than that it should be called the *Lord's supper*, he being the great object of it.

And that this Lord's supper is the same identical *sacrament*, so long known as the feast of the passover, is seen indubitably, not only from the reason of the thing, and the demonstrative scope of Scripture, but from the express words and actions of the Lord himself. It was expressly and repeatedly called "the passover." The occasion, the circumstances—every thing attest it to be the passover; that is, the sacrament previously called by that name. There was not, nor is there to this day, any thing new about it, save the outward form of administering it, and its commemorative character, as it applies to Christ.

In administering it, we can no longer use such words and actions as refer to the Egyptian deliverance as a type, and the work of Christ as the antitype; but our words and actions must refer to the atoning death of Christ directly, as an accomplished fact.

The apostatizing Jews who renounced their religion at the time of Christ, by denying their Saviour, forsook also their passover. Had they adhered to it, it would necessarily have carried them right into Christianity, or rather, in other words, would have kept them in it. Those who suppose that the unbelieving Jews continued the passover in their worship, are under a great mistake. They may have continued some or all of the verbiage and manipulation, in which its ceremonies were performed; but they totally changed its character, object, end, and meaning. So that it is no longer the *same*, but quite another.

Before the advent the passover, according both to the law of their religion and the universal understanding, was essentially and preëminently Christian. Will any man say it was not? Will any man say that, either in theory or practice, it possessed any feature or trait of character not wholly and essentially Christian? It meant and inculcated all the principles, truths, and meaning of the true Messiah, and it meant and inculcated nothing else.

And now, after this very same identical Christ made his appearance in accordance with this sacrament, what did some of these worshipers do? They repudiated him, thus wholly severing the sacrament from all connection with its end and meaning—thus dissolving the sacrament from all connection with its Christ, and attaching to it another and wholly different, and a wholly false Christ. The retention of some of the words and actions formerly used, was exactly the same as it would be now for a body of Christians to apostatize and turn Mohammedans, and eat bread and drink wine in the worship of Mohammed, or any other false Christ, either past or future.

Thus the feasts of the unbelieving Jews are a totally different thing from that which the same persons celebrated previously. Previously they celebrated a sacrament essen-

tially Christian. Christianity was not an ingredient in it: it was every thing that was in it which made it in any sense religious. But now they celebrate a feast which is essentially profane, idolatrous, and deistical. The very essence of its religion is to repudiate—even to abhor the very Christ of the sacrament they formerly celebrated.

No two things can therefore be not only more dissimilar, but more hostile to each other, than the passover before the advent, and the so-called passover of the unbelieving Jews afterward.

But the same sacramental feast celebrated by believing Jews, and by Gentiles who associated with them religiously, though incidentally it took on a different name, was a simple continuance, because its character was identical and unchanged, though some of the outward forms were changed of natural necessity, as explained above.

Much of the false religions of the world correspond in external form to the true religion; and especially might we expect this to be the case with persons formerly professing and being familiar with the religion of the Bible, and apostatizing from it.

And again, we must remember that outright, professed departures from Scripture are seldom. Many of the heresies of the world claim to conform to the Bible, but wrest the word from its proper meaning. This is the case with the unbelieving Jews; or, if they are following the Old Testament, then it is certain that Christianity is idolatry. But the truth is, there is not one religious idea, fully understood, in the Old Testament, which is not repudiated by the unbelieving Jews.

Thus it is apparent that the Church, the religious people, the worship, the sacraments, all continued straightforward, uninterruptedly, and without deviation, through the period of the lifetime of the Saviour and the days of the apostles.

The name of the Church became changed from circumstances entirely adventitious, but which are nevertheless apparent and natural; and the name of the sacraments became changed in the same way and for the same reasons. And nothing can be more natural, or apparently necessary, than the change in the external forms of administering the sacraments. The names of the sacraments before Messiah, were called after the modes of administering them; and just so they chance to be since.

I ask, then, what is there essentially new in this sacrament? If this is a new sacrament, then there are three sacraments. And then it is apparent, that in the sense there are three, there are threescore. If you go beyond the two obligations, or the twofold obligation, viz., fealty to God and duty to man, then you may call every fact and doctrine of religion a sacrament, which nullifies the very idea of a sacrament.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCERNING THE JUDAIZING TEACHERS: WHO WERE THEY?
WHAT WERE THEIR ERRORS? OR, WERE THERE ANY
SUCH PERSONS?

WHEN the question arose in the Church, as it must necessarily have arisen, whether Jesus was the Christ, and the Church split into two great parties upon this question, the one apostatizing from the faith and prophecies of the Scriptures, and the other adhering thereto, there was, as might have been expected, a good deal of irregularity and confusion in the minds of many, respecting a number of questions likely to arise at this peculiar crisis of affairs. The unsettled views of some, and the extravagant and worldly belief of others, respecting their Messiah, as to his worldly kingship, his civil relations, etc., together with the errors of Pharisees and others respecting some important religious doctrines, were very likely, if not indeed certain, to blind the minds of many on several religious questions. Hence it became difficult for many to understand how several things in the Church *after* Christ could be lawfully conducted. Not discerning the simple typical nature of circumcision—its use, end, and purpose in the Church—and not distinguishing between the sacrament itself and the mere form of administering it, they did not see how the latter could be changed, or how it could be changed upon

the appearance of Christ and be afterward administered in some other form. And there were also other things pertaining to the ceremonies of religion, which must naturally abate on the coming of Christ, and which could not rationally be continued thereafter, and which being misunderstood by some, they supposed they were to be continued. They did not see their adumbrant character. And so some serious questions arose among Christians of those times, as to the nature of these ceremonies and the necessity or propriety of continuing them.

Arising out of these facts we have, in some of our current theology, explanations of these errors of what is called "Judaizing Teachers," or "Judaizing Christians," which I find it impossible to assent to.

In Buck's Theological Dictionary, enlarged by Dr. Henderson, we read that, "Judaizing Christians are those who attempted to mingle Judaism and Christianity together. This was done to some extent in the apostles' days," etc.

This language is unmistakably plain. Judaism is the common name given to the religion of the Church before Christ, as Christianity is the common name by which it is called afterward. This is strictly correct, literally; and is, I believe, the common understanding. And the "Judaizing Christians," we are told, attempted to mingle these two things together; and he tells us farther, that this attempt to mingle the Old Testament with the New, in one system of religion, was done to some extent in the apostolic days.

I marvel at this, greatly! For it is beyond all question true that this was not only done "to *some extent* in the apostles' days," but that it was done to the entire extent of the ability of all the apostles, and by every other orthodox minister of religion from those days to the present. Does Mr. Buck, or Dr. Henderson, or any other minister, teach differently? The writers of the New Testament not only

“mingle” their doctrines with those of the Old, but they teach the latter wholly and fully.

The pious and learned Dr. Doddridge, Exposition, Gal. vi., p. 668, says that a scheme arose of blending Judaism with Christianity. And at p. 664, on Gal. iii., he speaks of the religion which Paul preached as being “a Christianity of which Judaism made no part.”

Does Dr. Doddridge exclude the written religion of the Old Testament from his theology? If so, then he is consistent with himself in this particular. But if not, then he teaches *yes* and *no* upon the very same identical proposition.

I am sorry to have to say that other quotations, similar to the above, could be made from many other authors of high repute. But among them all, I know of nothing that any one has said beyond mere assertion. I have seen no attempt to inquire into the truth of the statements. Somebody stumbled into the error, and others seem to take it upon trust.

The simple historic truth of the matter, and which I presume will be specifically questioned by no one, is this:

Quite a number of early Christians, who lived before, and during, and after the ministry of Christ—there were many such—imbibed and held *errors* of religious doctrine, both before and in the time of Christ’s ministry; and they carried those errors along with them, and still held them after the death of Christ and during the ministry of the apostles; and with these **ERRORS** they disturbed the faith of many. It was not the teachings of Judaism—the Old Testament—that did the harm, but the very reverse of it; it was not the teaching of what Judaism *was*, but of what it was *not*, that did the harm. It was not the inculcation of “the original tenet of their brethren,” as Mr. Watson says, but the inculcation of what the original tenet of their brethren was *not*, that was doing the harm, and that St. Paul

complained of. It was not Judaism, but errors surreptitiously foisted upon Judaism, that was the ground of complaint. Surely there is a difference between what Judaism *was* and what it was mistaken to be by some who misunderstood it.

The teachers complained of taught that it was necessary to be circumcised in order to Church-membership. And, it may be inquired, Was not that an Old Testament doctrine?

The answer is this: It was the Old Testament doctrine that circumcision should *be used in and applied to the anti-Messianic period of the Church*. But without this essentially important understanding, it never was an Old Testament doctrine. The Old Testament teaches circumcision as a mode of administering the sacrament of personal adherence and fealty *before Christ's human appearance*; but it not only does not teach that that mode of taking the sacrament is to continue to be used *after* that event, but it teaches that it *cannot so continue*. And then perhaps I might be required to produce some evidence from the Old Testament to show that that mode of administering the sacrament of personal adherence to God is thus limited to that period of the Church. This task is easily performed.

Circumcision was *typical*, not of Christ, but of his visible appearance. It *foreshadowed*, or pre-represented, his coming. Well, it could do this only *before* his life and death happened. An occurrence cannot be *foreshadowed after* it has happened. The very idea of circumcision limits its use and application to the anti-Messianic period. So that it is as fully and clearly a doctrine of the Old Testament as the New, that the rite cannot be performed after Christ.

Mr. Watson, on this point—Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Judaizing Christians—says: "They accordingly displayed much zeal in support of the Mosaical economy."

This is most certainly, and, I do not hesitate to say, most clearly, the very reverse of the truth. They displayed much zeal in support, not of what the Mosaical economy *was* and is, but of what it was *not*. For, in the Mosaical economy, circumcision was *typical* of Christ's painful and bloody death; and therefore, according to that economy, it could be sacramentally performed only *before* that event. Whoever therefore attempted to perform circumcision subsequent to Christ's death, did so contrary to the Mosaical economy, and in accordance with no economy or teaching in any part of Scripture. Mistaking and misunderstanding the Mosaical economy, they taught what it never did teach, and so, also, what no one understanding the Old Testament ever taught.

Will Mr. Watson say there is any thing written in the New Testament, or was taught by Christ or his apostles, contrary to *any thing* in the Mosaical economy? Very well, then; why do we not now circumcise? Because the Scriptures forbid it. The Old Testament limits it to the coming of Christ, and the New tells us that Christ has come.

The authors above quoted, and others who might easily be quoted, call these mistaken teachers "*Judaizing teachers*." This is a misnomer. The meaning is that they were teachers of Judaism. In the particulars complained of, they certainly were not. Misunderstanding Judaism, they taught what the Scriptures did not teach. The true ground of complaint against them is, that they did *not*, not that they *did* teach Judaism.

Judaism—the written religion of the Old Testament—as it was and is, was the very thing needed to be taught. It was the religion which Christ and the apostles taught, and which all Christians now teach, repudiating no part of it. If not, why do we call it our Bible?

Mr. Watson says: "A great part of the Epistles of St.

Paul is directed against the Judaizing teachers who inculcated the original tenet of their brethren." *The original tenet of their brethren* must be intended to mean the true and genuine teachings of Moses. It would be doing Mr. Watson great injustice to understand him to allude to the erroneous teachings of some Pharisees and Sadducees, for they were very new things in the Church. So far from being *original*, they were not known until long since the times of the last prophets.

His teaching plainly is this: Certain Christian teachers, cotemporary with St. Paul, inculcated the original religious tenet of the Jews, as taught in the Scriptures; and because they thus taught what the Scriptures taught, St. Paul directed much of his inspired teaching against them.

This is palpably impossible. Either the Old Testament, or St. Paul's Epistles, or both, are uninspired and erroneous, or they do not teach "against" each other. Inspiration cannot teach *against* inspiration.

St. Paul did never teach "against" *any thing* in the Old Testament, nor against anybody for teaching any thing there found. If he did, then Christian theology is at an end. I hold that proposition to be unquestionable, and therefore conclude that these mistaken teachers of Christianity were endeavoring to teach, not Judaism, not any doctrines of the Old Testament Scriptures, not any "original tenet" of the Jewish people, but an error in theology, a new doctrine, and a new error; not only an error which never did exist in the Church before, but one which never could have existed before. Not discerning that Judaism limited the rite of circumcision (not the sacrament) to the period of the Church before Christ's coming, and not understanding its nature, its adumbrant, foreshadowing character, they undertook to continue it after it was dead by the very conditions and limitations of its own being. To call

them *Judaizing* teachers is, therefore, at least, a misnomer. St. Paul complained of these men for teaching error—for teaching for inspiration that which inspiration did not teach. Did St. Paul complain of them for teaching the truth? Then *he* was a teacher of error. Inspiration anywhere, about any thing, is true, universally true. Let God be true, and every man a liar.

CHAPTER XXII.

DID CHRIST OR THE APOSTLES INTRODUCE OR TEACH ANY NEW DOCTRINES, EITHER OF RELIGION OR MORALS, NOT ALREADY TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES?

I ANSWER this important and significant question in the negative, without qualification. The theory of religion consists in doctrines. They are very different things from facts. The latter, as I understand, are introduced naturally, and serve the purpose of illustrating, explaining, making practically familiar to the mind, the doctrines intended to be believed. The facts of the New Testament are, of course, all new—all facts are new.

The doctrines of the Bible are by no means numerous; they are not, however, capable of being enumerated with distinctive and specific certainty. Some doctrines may be looked at in various points of light, and hence may be regarded as one or as several. I will enumerate a few leading doctrines which, on the whole, will be regarded as embracing all that is necessary to be believed on the subject of religion.

It will not be questioned that the *Being and Attributes of God* are fully set forth in the Old Testament; and also the *Personality and Divinity* of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. On the last point reference may be made to Gen. i. 2, Isa. vi. 8, 9, Ps. cxxxix. 7-12, Isa. xlv. 3, Joel ii. 28.

The doctrine of the *Holy Trinity* is alluded to in Gen. i. 26. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," etc.; and more fully in Gen. iii. 22, and xi. 7, Isa. xlvi. 16, 17, and Zech. xiii. 7.

Human Depravity is spoken of in Job xiv. 4. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean," etc. The context makes the allusion plain. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me"—Ps. li. 6; and throughout nearly the whole of the Psalm. See also Ps. cxliii. 2, and elsewhere.

The *Atonement* is clearly set forth in the fifty-third of Isaiah: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities," etc.; and also in many other places.

Moral Agency is thus taught in Deut. xxx. 19: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live;" and in Josh. xxiv. 15: "Choose this day whom ye will serve," etc.

Justification is also taught. "But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Ps. cxxx. 4. "And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. xv. 6. "How, then, can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" Job xxv. 4. See also Ps. cxliii. 2, and other places.

The doctrine of *Faith* is set forth in many places. "And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. xv. 6. "I will hide my face from them. I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith." Deut. xxxii. 20. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job

xix. 25. "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us." Dan. iii. 17. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. vi. 10. See also in the eleventh of Hebrews, the references to the faith of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and other Old Testament saints. See also 2 Chron. xx. 20, Neh. ix. 8, and many other places.

Repentance is plainly set forth in many places: in 1 Kings viii. 47, Ps. vii. 12, Ezek. xviii., and many other places.

The specific doctrine of *Regeneration* some may think less explicitly taught in the Old Testament than any of the foregoing; and yet, it is so clearly to be inferred from several passages, and from the general tenor of the Old Testament, that the Saviour held Nicodemus culpable for not knowing and understanding it fully. "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" Dr. Doddridge paraphrases this language as follows: "Jesus then answered and said unto him, How, Nicodemus! art thou a teacher of Israel, of so distinguished a rank and character, and dost thou not know these things, when so much is everywhere said in Scripture of the purifying and quickening operations of the Divine Spirit? Compare Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, and Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. It is high time thou shouldst be better informed concerning them." Expos. p. 57. The passages cited set forth the doctrine very plainly.

The *Witness of the Spirit* is taught very plainly. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job xix. 25. "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in

whose spirit there is no guile." Ps. xxxii. 2. Other quotations could be made.

The general doctrine of *the Holy Ghost* is also a well-settled tenet of the Old Testament. The doctrine of what is called *the gift* of the Holy Ghost, as supposed to have been bestowed first on the day of Pentecost, is misunderstood by many. They seem to understand it in the sense of a totally new thing in religion. But surely it cannot be for a moment held that prior to this time God had not condescended to commune spiritually, that is, by and through the Holy Ghost, with men. The gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost was, in kind, the same as had been experienced thousands of times before and since. It was extraordinary or unprecedented in *degree*, or in *volume*, but not in *kind*. This harmonizes naturally and beautifully with the occasion; but it cannot be maintained that previously to this time men did not experience the operation of the Holy Spirit. Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Holy Ghost, teaches well on this point.

Sanctification is also plainly set forth. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Ps. li. 2. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Other passages could be cited.

The *Possibility of Apostasy* is taught in Ezek. xviii. 24, and other parts of the same chapter. "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness

that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." See also Ezek. iii., xxxiii., and elsewhere.

The *Resurrection of the Body*. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job xix. 26. And in Ps. xvi. 10: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." And in Isa. xvi. 10: "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise." But some still doubt whether the doctrine of the *Resurrection* was intended to be taught in the Old Testament. But this question is set at rest in the following manner: The Sadducees, who discarded this doctrine, in Matt. xxii. 23, undertook to confound the Saviour in regard to it, by supposing a case of seven brethren, who successively married the same woman. The doctrine, therefore, they argue, cannot be true, for, in the supposed resurrection, whose wife shall she be? The reply of the Saviour, so far as it is given to us, was laconic, but very full and comprehensive: "YE DO ERR, NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES." If you understood the Scriptures which you profess to believe, you would understand this doctrine, and would see that there is no difficulty whatever in the case you suppose. Thus, the Saviour held that the doctrine was taught in the Old Testament sufficiently plain for them to understand it, and they were held culpable for not understanding it from those teachings.

The General Judgment. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will

bring thee into judgment." Eccl. xi. 9. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Eccl. xii. 14. "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Ps. i. 5.

Future Punishment. "The wicked man travaileth in pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor." Job xv. 20. See also several other places in the book of Job. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." "The wicked shall be turned into hell." Dan. xii. 2, Ps. ix. 17, Prov. xiv. 32, etc.

Future Happiness. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job xix. 25. "In thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Ps. xvi. 11. "As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Ps. xvii. 25. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32. "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked." Eccl. iii. 17.

Thus we have glanced at pretty much all the commonly recognized doctrines of Christianity, and we find them all taught in the Old Testament. More extensive references could be made, but two or three are sufficient for our present purpose. This point, being of great practical importance, will be more largely elaborated in a future chapter.

Many persons write and speak as though the great and vital doctrines of Christianity were never taught until the time of the New Testament, and so they speak of *Christianity* as a new, and peculiar, and more perfect kind of religion than any previously known or taught; but it is an

error. These doctrines were more elaborated in the New Testament, as we shall see; but no new doctrine was taught.

Many persons regard the new commandment of our Lord, that we should love one another, as a peculiarity of this new Christianity of which some men speak. They misread and misunderstand the Scriptures. On this point Dr. Belcher, in his *History of Religious Denominations*, Pref. p. 18, makes the following very sensible remark:

“The great law, which has often been considered as peculiar to Christianity—to do good to our enemies—is an Old Testament injunction, quoted by the blessed Redeemer, and repeated by his apostles. It is evident, therefore, that certain severities peculiar to that dispensation, both in point of enactment and matter of fact, originated in circumstances of an especial nature, and were under the guidance of infinite wisdom—the reasons for which not being assigned, it were presumptuous in us to conjecture them.”

This valuable suggestion might be kept in mind very profitably when we read many parts of the Old Testament. We see many things there very different from any thing we have seen in our times, and we too hastily refer them to a different *dispensation*, which solves all difficulties. By this we mean a different system of Divine providence and oversight, as if a *change* in the system of Divine government would be consistent with the Divine character.

In those distant ages there were circumstances and conditions of things, both general and particular, very widely different from any thing within the little sphere of our knowledge and experience, and which furnished “reasons” for all those things of which we read. Those reasons are unexplained, and if explained, the explanations might or might not be satisfactory to us. It ought to be enough, however, for us to know that they were satisfactory to the Divine oversight.

And it might be properly added here, also, that not only do we not find any new doctrine of religion in the New Testament—any doctrine not previously taught in the Old—but we find also that Christ and the apostles did not omit to teach any doctrine found in the Old Testament. They taught fully every religious tenet found there, and nothing else; or in other words, they taught fully all the doctrines of Judaism, and nothing else.

And where is the minister of any considerable experience in preaching, who has not proved every doctrine, and every shade and phase of every doctrine of his religion, many and many a time from the Old Testament, as he has taught and elaborated these doctrines in the pulpit?

We ought to be consistent; and if we truly believe the Old Testament to contain but a partial or defective religion, falling somewhat short of the gospel, we ought so to preach to the people. We ought not to preach that Judaism is something different from the gospel, and then preach a full Christianity in all its shades and shapes from the Old Testament. Both things cannot be true.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DID CHRIST INTRODUCE OR TEACH ANY NEW ECCLESIASTICAL RULES? OR WERE THERE ANY, AND WHAT CHANGES IN PUBLIC WORSHIP OR CHURCH USAGES IN THOSE DAYS?

WE come now to inquire whether Christ and his apostles introduced any new ecclesiastical rules. Did they remodel the Church? or, as many imagine, did they set up a new Church?

On this subject many seem to have overlooked the important truth that, in the days of Christ and the apostles, there was no disagreement between any parties about the Church. There is not in the New Testament the least intimation of any disagreement between any persons about the Church. The differences between Christ and his followers on the one hand, and other Jews on the other, related wholly to other matters. Church rules, or customs, or government, did not in any way enter into these controversies. These questions related exclusively to the vitally important religious *fact* whether Jesus was or was not the Christ of their common religion. There is not even a suggestion in the New Testament that the Church was faulty, or needed any change, either in its outward forms or in its religious tenets. The sole difficulty was this: A party arose in the Church denying the truth of the religion of

the Church in *this*, that they denied that Jesus was in truth the Christ.

The notion that a *new Church* was then set up by Christ, or by his apostles, is not only gratuitous and without any historic facts to support it, but is clearly contradicted by all the history and all the analogies in the case.

Christ was born in the Church of his fathers, and lived and died in it. He preached as other Jews preached, and conformed to the customs of the temple and synagogue. Where there was no synagogue, he submitted to the inconvenience and preached in other places. We have no information of his making any considerable changes in any thing. In the temple and synagogue services he conformed to the regular customs of the Church.

Whether it was customary in rural districts, where there were no synagogues, for Jewish preachers to preach out-of-doors or in houses, I know of no history that informs us; but I do not see that the Saviour was complained of for doing so, or that the people were complained of for hearing him on such occasions, or that it was regarded a new thing.

The Saviour was complained of in the Church, and by the proper officers of the Church, for violating the fundamental law of its religion; and he was tried, convicted, and punished; and whatever else may have been said against this proceeding, I have not heard it said that the charge was not in itself a legitimate one, or that the Church had not a right to try him. We hear no intimation that the Church had not jurisdiction both of him and of the offense; that is, regarding him as a mere member of the Church.

Any other person, to have done exactly what he did, would have been rightfully punished by the Church therefor.

The complaint of heresy against Christ was a blunder.

It was not that he preached *Christology*, or, if any one prefers it, *Christianity*. All the Jews preached Christ; that is, the doctrine of a scriptural Christ, and of salvation through him. That is to say, that was certainly their religion; and each man preached it as well and as fully as he understood it. John the Baptist went much farther than this, though in strict pursuance of their public faith, and preached, as hundreds of thousands publicly professed, that the Christ *had now come*. This was certainly a possible thing.

It was not for all this that complaints were made against Christ. No; nor was it for his unbending exhortations to a more strict and scriptural morality. Though the proud Pharisees, and other men of loose morals, did not like his bold expositions and denunciations of their departures from the religion of the Scriptures, these things formed no part of the legal complaints against him. Indeed, I go farther, and say, that it was not for any particular thing, nor for all the things found in his public preaching, that furnished the ground of charge against him, for which he was crucified.

This was the charge against him: that he *held*, though he did not publicly preach it, *that he himself was the Christ*. And hence I said that the same things which he did would have laid another liable to proper punishment for blasphemy.

So far as we know, his preaching, both as to matter and manner, was pretty much the same as that of John the Baptist; though he no doubt went much farther in correcting the moral and religious errors of the times; that is, he held the Church to the proper religion and morals of the Church. He made no innovation—he introduced nothing new. I know of no new thing needed to be introduced; nor do I learn from the history that he introduced any religious, moral, or ecclesiastical rule not fully warranted by the written and acknowledged religion of the Church.

He was a regular member of the Church generally, and

of his particular Church, just as other men were then, and just as we are now. If Christ did introduce any new religion, morals, or Church rules, it is for those who hold that he did to specify and show it. This, I confess, I have never seen attempted.

It seems by many to be supposed that the passages of Scripture in 1 Cor. xii. 28, Eph. iv. 11, and a few other places, respecting different offices, duties, and operations in the Church, indicate the formation of a new Church. In regard to these passages, about which, however, there is much difference of opinion among commentators, there is but a single remark that need be made here. Whatever else may be said of them, let them be carefully examined, and it can but be seen that they do not intimate the inauguration of a new ecclesiastical system. They say several things about the Church, the duties of several officers in it, etc., but they nowhere intimate the making of a new Church, or that one has been made.

And the same thing must be said of the apostles. They, too, were Jews—were born, lived, preached, and died in the Church. *They never changed their ecclesiastical relations.* There is not only no intimation of the sort in the history, but I hope hereafter to show that it would have been not only useless and unmeaning, but, I will add, absurd to do so.

But by this I do not mean to say that in the period under notice *no* changes took place in public worship and Church customs. Considerable changes of this sort have always been witnessed in all ages of the Church; and also in any period of the Church, now or formerly, considerable variety in these things is seen in different portions of the country. These changes originate in necessity, in taste, in error, in reform, in a variety of incidental circumstances. Separate congregational worship was not probably known until the

time of the Babylonian captivity. It originated in necessity or convenience, which is easily seen. But it was not always the same. In the time of Christ there was considerable variety in the different portions of the Jewish Church, the Hebrew, the Samaritan, and the Hellenist; and also in city and rural districts.

Look also at the Church in this respect since the time of the apostles. In different periods and different countries there has been great variety in outward manners. Look at the variety now among different classes of Christians. It is not true, as many suppose, that the ancient worship was always exactly so, fixed and changeless. The people were as natural then as now.

What I assert is, that no considerable or marked changes in Church discipline, government, or forms of worship, or outward Church rules, were made at this time. The only change in religion or worship that did occur was a simple knowledge and proper recognition of the fact of Christ's coming, and, of course, a conformity in worship to the fact.

Those who tell us that in the *formation* of the *Christian* Church they followed the *model* of the synagogue, do not clearly consider what they write. *Followed the model*, indeed! They followed the model just as we, to-day, follow the model of yesterday. What was a synagogue but a church? What was a church but a synagogue? They both meant the same thing. And, as the believing and rejecting Jews came to separate from each other, and worship in separate synagogues, it became as natural as needful to speak of them in distinction from each other; and mere accidental custom continued the one name to one class, while the other was called *Assembly*, or Church.

At the first, when the separation began, and for many years afterward, the two things were exactly alike, with this single exception, that the one party, holding to the

Scriptures, received Christ; and the other, apostatizing therefrom, rejected him, and looked forward to some imaginary Christ in the future. And from that day to this there has been no marked or material difference, save in such incidental things, varying in times and places, as the two tenets suggested.

Nevertheless, the very circumstance that, prior to this time, public and private worship looked *forward* to a *coming* Christ, and that subsequently all worship looked *back* to a Christ who had already come, and suffered, must certainly necessitate some changes in Church actions as well as in those of other religious manners. Such changes as these took place, not indeed by any positive law, but as matter of course, in order that worship might continue to be rational and the same.

The idea that those Jews who received Christ formed a new Church, is a very natural deduction from the glaring error of fact previously noticed—that *the rejecting Jews maintained intact their former religious and ecclesiastical position*. It is certain that one party maintained its old ground, and the other turned aside; and the way, and the only way, to determine which party stood firm and which turned aside, is to inquire whether Jesus was or was not the Christ of the Old Testament. He was or he was not. If he was, then the receiving Jews—those who so held—remained firm and continued the Church; and the rejecting Jews turned away and made a new Church. It was the one way or the other. The Old Testament religion recognized Christ as its body, substance, life, and vitality—that Christ was either Jesus or some other personage. The receiving Jews, called Christians, held that Jesus was that Christ. Then, if he was, the case is settled, and his followers continue the old Church, and those who leave it leave it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WAS THE FORMATION OF A NEW, OR ANOTHER CHURCH, AT THE TIME OF CHRIST, OR AT ANY OTHER TIME, A POSSIBLE THING?

I NOW go a step beyond the position of the last chapter, and affirm that the organization of a new Church was impossible. When I say impossible, I do not mean merely impracticable. The formation of a new Church never happened—never could happen. A society of human persons organized with any particular positive laws, and a legal framework, would not for that reason be a Church. *The Church* comes about in a very different way. *The Church is the natural result of individual religion in several persons who have the opportunity of personal association.* Religion makes the Church of unavoidable necessity. Positive laws could no more do it than they could make a religion. *The Church is the religious association of religious persons.* The Church is not first made, and then religious persons brought into it. The thing works the other way. Religion is inculcated absolutely and independently by the power of its own innate truth; and the *association* it excites and insures of several religious persons, as such, is what we mean when we say *Church*.

Now how do we know, it might be inquired, that the religious association of religious persons, that we call

Church, will certainly take place without positive laws to enforce it?

We know it with certainty, from the very nature of religion. It could not be otherwise. Religion has in it inherently a law of social gravitation, which brings men *together* for religious ends and purposes, which law is as certain in its application as the law of physical gravitation. Religion brings its votaries *together* for mutual enjoyment and advantage, where no positive obstruction intervenes, with unmistakable certainty. The absence of such association is the best evidence the nature of the case admits of, of the absence of religion.

And when they come together thus religiously for worship, for mutual religious enjoyment, it is impossible to conduct the worship without regularity, order, rules—and so you have a Church; and the aggregation of all these churches is what we call, in a more extended sense, *the Church*.

And then it may be inquired, Have we no divine rules on the subject? Did not Christ prescribe rules for the Church?

It is certainly true that Christ and all the inspired writers taught much on this subject, but it is not true that any of them taught or prescribed any positive laws for the Church. They taught the principles upon which the government must proceed, but the particular rules by which these principles were to be carried out, were left open, subject to a thousand variations to be met in the great variety of human condition and circumstances. They prescribed the principles of family government, which may never be departed from; but they did not enact and fix the dining-hour, the hour for rising, and many other needful rules in family government. And so the principles of civil government are likewise carefully laid down, but the posi-

tive laws by which civil power and jurisdiction are exercised are left open. It would not be expedient for the positive laws of the family, the State, or the Church to be uniformly the same.

At the time of Christ there were religious men instructed in the Bible, and so, of necessity, there was a Church. Then what is meant by having *another Church*? The very idea implies the necessity of another religion. For extending the association, however great, for the increase of the same religion, would be extending the same Church, not making another. In a city, in the country, in this or that region, or under these or those circumstances, certain rules might be very wholesome, or even necessary, which would be worthless or even injurious in another place. But this is no more another Church than municipal laws of local application make another government.

The unbelieving or rejecting Jews seceded from the Church, and formed another. It was another, although the outward form may have continued the same. It was another, because the religion of the old Church was renounced and faith in a false Christ set up in its stead. A Mohammedan or Mormon congregation might assemble in the same way, and go through the same outward forms of worship, as a Christian congregation, but it could not be called a *Church* for that or any other reason.

A new *Church*, therefore, implies a new *religion*. And will any man say that, at the time of Christ, the pious Jews who followed the Old Testament teachings were required to renounce their religion in order to follow Christ?

Some important changes took place, both in the modes of worship, and in many things pertaining to religion, in the time of Luther; and, excepting the mere chronological or historic fact of the Advent, they were greater and more strongly marked than those in the time of Christ, but no

one would call it a new Church. It was merely a reform in religious and outward manners.

Religion once agoing in the world, a new *Church* is impossible. There can be no such thing.

And yet the *Library of Ecclesiastical Knowledge*, Vol. II., p. 8, tells us that "the Christian Church is unlike the Jewish Church." And this disparity we are told is in this, that the latter "embraced the whole nation, without reference to the vitality of the faith possessed by the individuals of which it was composed."

To this I reply that that is an open falsification of the truth of the written religion of the Old Testament. I appeal to the Old Testament, and to every man that ever read it, that it absolutely and unconditionally requires "the vitality of faith in the individual members."

Again, the disparity is that "the Christian Church comprises only those who form part of the spiritual seed of Abraham."

And just so of the Church "in the wilderness," and in all time, before and since the time of Christ.

Again, of the Christian Church: "It predicates nothing of men as men; it knows of no rule but that of truth, of principle, of conscience."

And will any man say that the Church at any former period proceeded upon any other principle? Let any man read the Old Testament and see.

And the farther catalogue of *distinctions* between the two Churches are of a similar character. They are every one made up of either mere phraseological fancy or plain perversions of historic truth. I speak plainly, because the occasion demands it.

Dr. Hales—*Analysis of Chronology*, Vol. I., p. 114—in speaking of the distinction between the Jewish and Christian Churches, says: "There are but two rites—the one

initiatory, and the other commemorative—introduced into the Church of Christ.”

It may be difficult to understand what an intelligent man can mean by such an expression. Surely he cannot mean what he says, for everybody knows that there is not, and never was, a day since the time of Moses, that the Church had not, and did not habitually observe more than a hundred *rites*—religious ceremonies. He certainly does not mean “rites”—he must mean *sacraments*. And then he is mistaken in supposing that these sacraments were *introduced* into the Church at that time. It has already been shown in Chapter XX. that these sacraments were not *then* introduced, because the same two sacraments belong necessarily to the Church at all times, and that at this time nothing was *introduced* into the Church but the modes of administering the sacraments. But most assuredly the *rites* of religion—scores of them which the apostles found in the Church—continued in it without an objection from any one; and many of them, with very little alteration, are observed in it now almost everywhere.

The Comprehensive Commentary—Acts ii. 42-47—tells us that “in these verses we have the history of the *truly primitive Church*, of the *first days* of it, its state of infancy indeed, but like that, the state of its greatest *innocence*.”

I need hardly remind the reader that in quoting from another, I always italicize where he does, because I endeavor to quote truly. Well, if the above statement be true, then we must give it up, and say there was no *Church*—no true Church—before this period. But I insist there is this difficulty in the way: *no man can show any new thing in this so-called new Church*. I challenge the production of a new religious tenet, doctrine, or rule of ethics. And in regard to the mere ceremonies of religion, I challenge the production of *any changes* of a vital, essential, or sacra-

mental character, save such things as the mere *coming* of Christ rendered naturally necessary. Then what is meant by "*truly primitive*"—"first days"?

There is evidently nothing really *primitive* nor *new* about it. The thing is impossible. A *new* Church without a *new religion* is a contradiction and an impossibility.

Moreover, with all reverence it may be said that there *could* be nothing in the New Testament against, or derogatory, or contrary, to any thing in the Old. The supposition denies perfection to the Almighty. A *new* Church is impossible. It is absolutely and logically impossible upon supposition that the New Testament is divinely inspired.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE QUESTION OF THE PERSONAL IDENTITY OF CHRIST
APPLIED TO THE CHURCH BEFORE, AND DURING, AND
AFTER HIS LIFE.

I THINK it has been shown that neither Christ nor the apostles introduced any new *religious doctrines* in their day; and also, that they did not fail to teach fully all the doctrines contained in the then existing Scriptures; and farther, that the Church did not suffer annihilation, cessation, interregnum, nor change, beyond such improvements and modifications as incidentally met and conformed to the advent of Christ. But still there is one thing that must mark a material difference in the mode of recognizing the Saviour before and after Christ. This should now be carefully noted.

There is one feature in the New Testament which could not, in the nature of things, be found in the Old. The doctrine of Christ, including all his characteristics, is confessedly taught in the Old Testament. But his *personal identity* could not be known, nor questioned, nor believed in, until after his personal coming. He must needs appear at some particular period, and, exclusively, to some of the people then living. And then, and not before nor after, the question of his proper identity must arise, and must be decided.

It does not by any means follow, that because all the

Jewish people believed in a coming Christ, and that they were baptized by John into the belief that that was the very time of his coming, that they should therefore all agree as to his personal identity. They were as liable to err on this point as on any other. It was certainly possible that a false claim to the Messiahship might have been made; and it was perhaps more to be looked for then than at any other time; and because some one claimed to be the Christ, it did by no means follow that he was truly so.

This distinct question, then, must needs arise—whether the man Jesus was the Christ. The question was vital to religion. To receive a false Christ, was idolatry; and to refuse the true Christ, was apostasy. It is very true that all might have decided this question correctly if they had proceeded right about it. He himself said to them: “Search the Scriptures—they testify of me.” A fair comparison of the *book* with the *man* would have settled the question of identity. Still it is true that, through pride, prejudice, and carelessness, many believed he was not the right man.

During his life there must have been some doubts with regard to him. His death and resurrection were the great and final tests, so far as outward proofs were tests.

Now, just at this period, when the resurrection became an historic fact, the Old Testament descriptions of Christ became inherent in the identical man. Before this it was not apostasy to deny him; but now it is. Now the Scriptures *touch* him personally, and stick their very words into his identical personality.

The connection, then, between Old Testament Christianity and New Testament Christianity is the connection of touch, of oneness, of adhesion, of identity. In all religious points of view they are not two things, but one thing. What we call Judaism—the Church, or state of the Church, before Christ—and what we call Christianity—the state of the

Church since—are now seen to be but two names for the same thing; that is, in religion one thing, and only chronologically two things. They inhere in each other. They embrace each other. They inhere, just as two parts of any thing inhere—just as two portions of the Church at any other period inhere. The two parts are separated only by an event in the Church. A man is the same person after his majority, or any other point, as before.

The Old Testament religion, doctrine, faith, run right on into Christ, and right through his personal manhood into the faith which afterward attaches, retrospectively, to his atoning acts. The separation is a mere verbal separation—a separation which is made in writing and printing, because we cannot write two sets of words on the same paper. But in all religious respects they are one thing, and not two things.

Now it so happened, that about eighteen hundred years ago, a large number of professors of religion, members of the Church, repudiated the Saviour, denied Christ, quit their religion, turned against the Bible, apostatized from the faith. And they not only denied the Christ they formerly believed in, but they took up a new and false Christ—one yet unborn, one who has made no atonement—an idolatrous Christ, not known to the Scriptures.

Christ, therefore, naturally sustained this threefold relation to the Church, as he is necessarily looked upon by men: his visible personality was first *prospective*, then for a brief space it was *present*, and ever after it is *retrospective*.

But this is not a religious relation: it is chronological. He was all the while the same Christ—the same Mediator—the same Saviour. The same faith in the same Christ was always necessary. It is only from the human point of observation that he seems to present this threefold relation to the Church.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHO WERE PROSELYTES, AND WHAT WAS THE DISTINCTION
BETWEEN THEM AND JEWS?

It is well known that the term *Jew* was not originally applied to the descendants of Jacob. More than seven hundred years after the death of that patriarch it was first used to distinguish those who adhered to Rehoboam, on their separation from the ten tribes, who were led off under Jeroboam. Being chiefly composed of the large tribe of Judah, they were generally called by the name of this tribe, *Jew* being derived from *Judah*. The Israelites, as the other party were called, being, in the course of many years, partially lost sight of in history, and the Judahites increasing in historic importance, at least, the name Jew, in the course of time, came to be used generally to denote those composing the whole Church, and professing that religion.

And it is the error of many to suppose that in Scripture the name *Jew* was intended to apply exclusively to the entire lineal descendants of Jacob. It had reference more to the Church, to the religion, than to birth.

The people commonly called Jews, at and before Christ, were the descendants of Jacob in the sense that they had a common origin in the family of that patriarch, fifteen hundred years ago, and they still claimed this common, ancient origin. But the vast influx and outflow in this long period, will show any one at once, that by this time the

ancient patriarchal blood had become so diluted that it existed more in name and fancy than in fact; though some lines on the male side are distinctly traceable and infallibly traced to the time of Christ.

This, however, as any one may see in a moment, proves nothing, or at most, very little, with regard to the descending hereditary current of the entire nation or people. Many genealogical lines are traceable in any nation, though there may be thousands of outflowing and inflowing currents everywhere all the while.

It was the policy of the Israelites, from the first, to augment their numbers *from without*, as far as practicable; and that they did receive large accessions in this way, is beyond question. The laws prescribed through Moses had particular cognizance of this matter.

“And when the stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one born in the land; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.” Ex. xii. 48.

“But the stranger that dwelleth with you, shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Lev. xx. 34.

“One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you; an ordinance for ever in your generations. As ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.” Num. xxv. 14, 15.

There are also many other places in the Old Testament where this subject is treated of. The term “stranger” is understood to mean the same as was afterward understood by proselyte, or those outside the lineal Israel.

In Esther viii. 17, we learn, by mere casual remark, that

“many of the people of the land became Jews.” Isaiah speaks of “the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord.” They had thoroughly renounced idolatry and embraced the true religion. Ezra vi. 21, Ruth i. 16, ii. 11, Ps. xlv. 10, etc. They became Jews to all intents and purposes; that is, they became members of their religion and Church.

I readily grant that, at least in some periods, there was some distinction, in some minor respects, made in the worship of these proselytes and others. But this could extend only to those individual persons who were proselyted. But in a single generation these persons were dead, and their posterity intermixed indiscriminately with other Jews, and were soon lost sight of in the common mass. The Jews—especially after they took that name—were always a people of mixed blood.

Indeed, from the first, the Israelites were but half-breed descendants from Jacob, because the twelve sons of that great patriarch did not marry their sisters. The sons married outside the family; and the daughters, if there were any, and married, must have done the same thing. And we can hardly suppose that the sons and daughters of the twelve patriarchs intermarried. But after two or three generations there was no natural objection to a general intermarrying. So that, from the time of the first three generations, it is not likely that more than one-fourth or one-eighth of the Israelitish blood descended from the loins of Jacob.

And then there was always a very large influx from without, in various ways. On this point, among the many historic notices that might be easily quoted, I cite the following, in *Conybeare and Howson's St. Paul*, Vol. I., p. 19, which they support by abundant historic reference:

“Many proselytes were attached to the Jewish communities wherever they were dispersed. Even in their own

country and its vicinity, the number, both in early and later times, was not inconsiderable. The Queen of Sheba, in the Old Testament; Candace, Queen of Ethiopia, in the New; and King Izates, with his mother Helena, mentioned by Josephus, are only royal representatives of a large class. During the time of the Maccabees, some alien tribes were forcibly incorporated with the Jews. This was the case with the Ituræans, and probably with the Moabites, and, above all, with the Edomites, with whose name that of the Herodian family is historically connected. How far Judaism extended among the vague collection of tribes called Arabians, we can only conjecture from the curious history of the Homerites, and from the actions of such chieftains as Aretas, (2 Cor. xi. 32). But as we travel toward the west and north, into countries better known, we find no lack of evidence of the moral effect of the synagogues, with their worship of Jehovah and their prophecies of the Messiah. Nicolas of Antioch is only one of that 'vast multitude of Greeks' who were attracted in that city to the Jewish doctrine and ritual. In Damascus, we are even told by the same authority, the great majority of the women were proselytes."

It is therefore the mistake of many to suppose that the descendants of Jacob have always lived in the world a "distinct people." They were *distinct* chiefly because their religion distinguished them from other people. It was much the case with the Church, in this regard, in former times, as it is now.

And even the laws of exclusiveness, such as they had, were by no means always obeyed. It was the law that they should not marry out of the Church, and yet this was extensively done on many occasions. It was largely done soon after the return from Babylon. See Ezra x., Neh. xiii. 23, Mal. ii. 11.

It seems to be supposed or assumed by some, that this influx from without was comparatively very small; so much so, as to be scarcely noticeable. This is a mistake. The history to the contrary is abundant. Outside people were proselyted, or converted, unlimitedly. That was the law of the Church, and that is the history of the times, both sacred and profane. The law and the practice conform to each other; and they were both very much the same as now. We bring everybody into the Church we can, and so did they. The principal difference is, that formerly they preached only *in the Church*, and to such as came to hear; but the doors were open, and *all were freely invited to come in*. We now go farther than this, and *go out after them*. And in old times too, they sometimes—very improperly, indeed—forced large communities to come in among them; and then the posterity of such, in a generation or two, became intermixed and indistinguishable in the common mass.

It is an error, therefore, to suppose that *the Jews* were exclusively the descendants of Jacob; nor did the lineal descendants of Jacob by any means all remain Jews. They sloughed off, and leaked out in many ways. On the return from the Babylonian captivity there were but about forty-three thousand remaining in the Church.

When the Jews divided upon the question of Christ into two great parties, the believing or Christian party were properly considered to be Jews. Howsoever the two parties respectively came to be called, popularly, after a time, the Christian party, that adhered to Christ, undoubtedly *were* the real and true Jews in preference to the others. And so you hear the word of the Lord, related by John, say: "And I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." Rev. ii. 9.

The apostatizing Jews who blaspheme the name of Christ, and are therefore *not Jews*, though they falsely call themselves such, having sold themselves to Satan, are of his synagogue. Nothing could be more natural than this declaration; and the same is repeated in Rev. iii. 9: "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie," etc.

St. Paul enlarges upon this idea more fully in the second of Romans, and shows that the true worshipers, and they alone, are properly Jews. He contends that, having left the Jewish Church by denying Christ, they were not Jews, though they were so called. He is not a Jew which is one outwardly—by mere birth and profession; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly—who follows Christ.

Nothing could more completely identify Judaism and Christianity than this argument of the apostle. He is not a Jew who has nothing but the *outward* claim—the mere birth and verbiage. To be a Jew he must have the Jewish *religion*—that which he professed and recommended. This argument is again referred to in Rom. ix., and in other places.

But at the same time that those who had abandoned the true Jewish religion by rejecting Christ, had forfeited all right to the name of Jew, it was also true that they called themselves Jews, though Paul says they were not, and John says they were not, but lied when they did so.

But still, in popular parlance, after a time, they came generally, and as the true Jews came to be popularly known by another name, they finally were uniformly called Jews. And so the apostatizing or false Jews were called *Jews*, and the true Jews were called Christians. All this was merely incidental, and was neither an advantage to the one nor a disadvantage to the other. The *name*, in the public mind, soon conformed in meaning to the thing. The only

use we have for names is to distinguish things and persons. The word *Jew*, as it is now popularly, and therefore properly used, is to this day strictly a misnomer or falsehood; or, in the verbiage of St. John, a *lie*. That is, it originated in falsehood; but the meaning being understood, it has long since ceased to convey any wrong idea, and answers all the simple purposes of a name.

But there is still another and very significant reason why the false Jews took and retained the old name. In those times a very monarchical idea attached to all governments. The rulers or the king were the government, and wore the name; and in this instance it so happened that nearly all the highest rulers and officials went with the apostates; and so if they had been the most insignificant few in numbers, they would have been likely to wear the old national name.

And hence the meaning to be attached to the expression "the Jews," so frequently met with in the New Testament. The meaning evidently is, the apostate, unbelieving, or false Jews. There were now two separate and distinct sorts of Jews—those who, maintaining their ancient faith, received Christ, and those who refused him. "The Jews" are frequently spoken of in contradistinction to the friends of Christ, when we know very well they were all Jews; that is, they were formerly one people: they were still called Jews for the reasons above, though they were not really Jews. This we know from the reason of the thing, and also from the explicit statements of Paul, John, and others.

About twenty-five years after the death of Christ, when the final separation between the two classes of Jews may be said to have well begun and to have made much progress, we hear Paul declare that the unbelieving party, though commonly called Jews, were not so in reality; they were not truly or religiously Jews; and more than forty years after that we hear John declaring and repeating the same

thing. But in the circumstances, nothing was more natural than that they should pass popularly by that name, and that the true and real Jews should take the name of Christ, or some such name.

Christians are not the true Church because they are called by the name of Christians, but because they follow Christ; neither are the other party apostates because they are called by this or that name, but for the sole reason that they *did reject Christ*.

It is apparent, then, that all along the line of the Church, from Abraham to the present, the policy was to bring in all who would come in, and incorporate them with the people of God. We call the incomers proselytes, or converts. The law of the Church in regard to these incomers—how they should be treated, and the relation they should bear to others, as it was written in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and later—was very much the same it is now. They, on their part, must conform to religion, and wear the badge of its social communion; and then they were to be received on an equal footing with others, and there was to be “no difference” between these and those. The identical persons proselyted might pass through a period of pupilage, or catechetical probation, to get them fairly in in good faith, but their posterity, supposing they did not personally apostatize, were soon lost in the common mass. There was to be “no difference” in them.

All the variations in these things, since the days of the prophets, have been in mere external manners; and on the whole, they have been very little: they have not been greater than in a hundred other matters of domestic and social habitude and custom of the times.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ARE CHRISTIANS PROSELYTES, OR CONVERTS, TO JUDAISM, THAT IS, TO THE RELIGION WHICH THE JEWISH CHURCH PROFESSED BEFORE THE DAYS OF CHRIST?

NAMES do not determine the character of *things*; neither does a change in name alter or affect the character of the thing. The only use we have for names is to distinguish different things in connection, so that the hearer may readily fix his mind on the thing of which the speaker speaks. Any name is correct that is uniformly assented to and understood.

The following propositions will not probably be denied :

First. Before the time of Christ, and indeed for some time afterward, the Old Testament was *the Bible of the Church*. It was the whole of the true Bible of the true Church. It contained, word for word, the religion of the Church.

Secondly. For fifteen hundred years, at least, it had been the policy of the Church to disciple, to convert, to proselyte outsiders; that is, to inculcate religious truth in the minds of unbelievers, to bring them to a knowledge of saving truth, and hence to bring them into religious association with religious people.

Or, to state it differently, the way was left open for those without to come in freely upon the prescribed conditions. There must be coöperation. How much zeal or anxiety was

manifested on the subject by either party, in these or those countries, in these or those ages, are other questions, and such as could be correctly answered only in a hundred different ways.

I affirm this, as well from the revealed history of the Church as from the reason of the thing. The former is unmistakably plain ; and as to the latter, it is *impossible* for a person to be religious and not make some reasonable effort to proselyte and convert others to the truth. The very nature of true religion, in any age of the world, or in any circumstances, requires this absolutely.

Thirdly. When Christ came, *he came in perfect accordance with the religion of the Church.* I speak of the religion of the Church as it *was* and is, notwithstanding any errors which might have prevailed with any who mistook or misunderstood their religion in these or those instances.

Fourthly. Then it follows, necessarily, that those who adhered to the religion of the Church received and adhered to Christ. Moreover, it results, from the character of God and the nature of man, that there *can be* but one true religion.

Fifthly. These religious men, after Christ, continued to stand in the same relation to the Church, to religion, and to irreligious persons, as before. And the history abundantly testifies that the policy has been to convert, to proselyte, to bring in, as many from without as practicable.

Sixthly. Then the question arises, *To what* were outsiders converted—proselyted ? What religion were they induced to embrace ?

To this question the answer is as apparent as it is necessary and unavoidable.

These persons, so brought in to the belief and embrace of true religion, in whatever age of the world, might be called disciples, converts, or proselytes : the meaning is, I

believe, about the same. Then there is no difference growing out of the *time when* unbelievers were thus brought into the Church, and to the embrace of true religion.

The policy of the Church is the same now it always was. It is rational—natural. Outsiders are now brought in, or they are permitted to come in, and they adopt the same faith they always did. In one age of the world you may call them proselytes, and in another converts; the principle is the same, and the words synonymous. And their children, if they do not leave the faith and communion of the Church, they stay in, as they all should, and as some do.

The words *Jew* and *Gentile* ought not to be suffered to lead any astray. These words designated the religious relation of these and those people. These were called Jews because they were *in* the Church; and those were called Gentiles because they were *out*. Well, did not the Gentiles *become Jews* by coming in? The Bible says so, and reason says so. Before Christ, the Church passed under the common name of Jews; and since, from mere adventitious reasons, under a different name. And the word *Gentile* has gone gradually into disuse, except in describing olden and Oriental circumstances; but the things and their relations remain substantially the same.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DID THE JEWS REJECT CHRIST? A VIEW OF THE QUESTION TAKEN DURING THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

THE prevalent notion is, that *the Jews*, in mass, were the enemies of Christ—they rejected him as the Messiah, and stood in solid phalanx against the religion of the gospel, from the first and finally. This is very far from being true, though I confess it is, to a considerable extent, warranted by very respectable teachings or assumptions on the subject.

Mr. Watson, *Biblical and Theological Dictionary*, Article Church, says: "The Jews fell, and the Gentiles came in their room." *Nevins's Biblical Antiquities*, at page 51, mentions *two* Jews who received Christ—Simeon and Anna—and says there were others, but inculcates the idea that they were the fewest number. *Robbins's World Displayed* says Jesus was almost universally rejected by both Jews and Gentiles.

And, indeed, nearly all the religious books I am acquainted with, that treat upon the subject at all, except the Bible, teach the same thing in substance. I have been taught it from the books, and from the pulpit, a thousand times, and for many years I really thought it was so.

There is no doubt, however, that Christ was rejected by Jews, and by Jews he was crucified; *but there is no evidence in Scripture that any large number of the Jewish people*

opposed him in any way. If, on the one hand, it is true that Jews opposed and crucified Christ, it is also true that Jews were his first and firmest friends. They received him, supported him, befriended him, and stood by him to the last; and until about twelve long years after his crucifixion, the Jews were his sole and exclusive followers; and when his disciples must have numbered tens and hundreds of thousands, there were none but Jews among them—no, not one.

Let us look at the testimony. The great numbers who followed him, and attended so faithfully upon his ministry, cannot all be set down as his faithful followers. Many turned back occasionally, as is the case now. But still, these followers must be regarded as having a strong impression in favor of his Messiahship. No doubt most of them were those baptized by John, and felt more or less strongly committed to him.

“And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.” Matt. iv. 25. And just before, we are told that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching; and that his fame went throughout all Syria, etc. A glance at the map will show that many of these must have gone twenty, fifty, or a hundred miles, to hear his preaching. And notice, too, that mostly, this is the very country where John had so recently preached with such wonderful results.

After the Sermon on the Mount, of which we have so large a synopsis, it is said that “great multitudes” followed him; and in Matt. viii. 18, on another occasion, it is incidentally mentioned, that when he saw “great multitudes” about him, he gave commandment to depart, etc.; and in Matt. viii. 34, it is said the whole city came out to meet him. In Matt. ix. 8, “multitudes” are spoken of as being the witnesses of one of his miracles; and in Matt. ix. 31, it is

said that his fame was spread abroad in all that country. In Matt. xii. 15, we read that "great multitudes followed him;" and the same thing in Matt. xii. 34-36.

In Matt. xiv. 5, we have a very significant remark respecting Herod the king. It seems he was desirous of putting John the Baptist to death long before he did. "And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet." John, the friend of Christ, who had proclaimed him to thousands, and had raised such a general belief in favor of Christ, causing the people to attach so much importance to the subject, that even the king, in that highly despotic government, dared not destroy him, because he *feared the multitude*, because they counted him as a prophet—that is, the Prophet, the Messiah. And this fear was so great that, though the taking of the lives of accused persons by kings was a mere circumstance, yet he had to wait and take advantage of a great festive occasion to execute his purpose.

It is true that Herod said he was "sorry" that he found himself compelled to behead John, and did it reluctantly "for the oath's sake," in which he had unwittingly sworn to give his daughter whatsoever she would ask. This was evidently a piece of chicanery and hypocrisy, on the part of Herod, to screen him from the feared vengeance of the people. He had put him in prison, "and when *he would* have put him to death, he feared the multitude."

This shows the popular estimation in which Christ was held; that whatever might be said of a few officials, or a handful of Pharisees, the people were, to a great extent, at least, his fast friends.

And then we constantly read of "great multitudes," "the multitude," and "very great multitudes," as being his followers, and the eager hearers of his teachings. We read in one place of a few priests and Pharisees who were offended

at one of his parables: "*But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet*"—Matt. xxi. 46—that is, the Divine Prophet, or Messiah. And again, this language is attributed to the chief priests and elders: "We fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet." Thus we find *the people* and *the multitude* on the side of John and Christ. In Luke xii. 1, Mark iii. 8, vi. 33, we hear of great masses of people thronging to hear the teachings of Jesus. The common people, we are told, heard him gladly; and he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. In Luke v. 17, we read of Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which came out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem; and Luke ix. 40, "The people gladly received him." In Luke x. 17, we learn that the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us *through thy name*." Luke viii. 17: "And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

In John xi. 48, some chief priests and Pharisees conclude that, "if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him;" and in John xii. 19, "The Pharisees said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him!"

The above are but a portion of the quotations which might be made, going to show that Christ was favorably received during his ministry by the Jewish people, and that he was opposed only by a few officials and Pharisees; and I know of no expression in the gospels which shows that either the person, the ministry, or supposed Messiahship of Christ, was opposed by any considerable number of Jews. The Jews were his friends. About the strongest remark I remember, which would seem to indicate a popular opposition to Jesus, is John vii. 1: "After these things Jesus

walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." Jewry means Judea, in the midst of which province Jerusalem was situate, and where the officials were found. He would not avoid the Jewish *people* by going from Judea to Galilee, for he was still among them; though he would avoid the officials. Moreover, the remark about killing must be referred to the officials, and not to the people. By "the Jews" is generally meant their officials, their government.

In this connection the *cleansing of the temple* deserves notice. When our Lord first entered upon his ministry, or soon after, he went into the temple at Jerusalem, and with ecclesiastical authority, and without opposition, so far as we know, with "a scourge of small cords" drove the sellers of sheep and oxen and the money-changers out of it, reproving them in the severest manner; and again, about three years afterward, when he made his grand entry into the city, not many days before his death, he did the same thing, with still more force and authority. We might imagine it to be almost a pity that we have not something like a detailed account of these important transactions. We have but a bare statement of the facts.

It was the great temple, in the great city, and was always frequented, if not thronged, by priests, Pharisees, and others. It was the grand rendezvous of his enemies, the officials of the Jews. Now, how could he have done this, with no personal force of a physical nature? There must have been a deep conviction among the great mass of the people, and at least a respectable portion of the officials, that he was the Messiah, or he could not have wielded such moral power. We do not read that he met with any resistance in either case. And in these instances it was not only authority, but it was the highest ecclesiastical authority, he assumed. He placed himself as the Guardian, Superior,

and Custodian of the great temple, overriding the authority of the Sanhedrim, priests, and worshipers, in their very face; thus openly claiming higher power than they all.

Here is most conclusive evidence that the Jewish Church were generally his followers, or at least his friends. Those at these times in and about Jerusalem must have been favorably disposed toward him.

And here it might not be amiss to notice a remark of Josephus on the subject. In *Antiquities*, Book XVIII., c. 3, he says of Christ: "He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles." It is known that Josephus says very little of Jesus or his followers. He speaks in terms of high respect of him, though he himself had such doubts of his Messiahship, that he never openly acknowledged him.

I conclude, then, that up to the time of his arraignment and trial, the Jewish people, in Palestine, at least, with some very few noted exceptions, were the friends and supporters of Christ, and were, at least, strongly inclined to favor his alleged Messiahship. Of course, in so large a Church, amounting to several millions, there was all the variety of degrees of interest felt in the subject. Many looked upon the question as of the deepest and most vital importance, while others troubled themselves less about it.

But still, as before explained, up to this time none could be regarded as finally, and in the highest sense, his disciples; for the reason that they had not been called upon to meet the great test of his Messiahship—viz., his death and resurrection.

But now, up to about the time of his arraignment, probably a day or two before his crucifixion, I ask for the evidence of rejection—of opposition to him anywhere by anybody, except here and there that of a few proud and disap-

pointed officials. I appeal to the Scriptures, while I hold that the common teaching on this subject is erroneous.

The Scripture teaching is plain and unmistakable, that up to the time of his arraignment, the moral tread of his footsteps throughout Palestine shook the nation to its very foundation. When he spoke, the thronging multitudes hung spell-bound upon his lips; and when he moved, the great and teeming masses moved almost instinctively with him. Never did *any man* so deeply and universally sway and carry the people with him as did the Saviour the Jewish people during these few years of his public teaching.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DID THE JEWS REJECT CHRIST? CONTINUED IN AN EXAMINATION OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION.

WE have now come down to the time of the arraignment, trial, and crucifixion. And here, also, we are not able to see that the great body of the Jewish people, or, indeed, any very large number of them, opposed the Saviour, denied his claims to the Messiahship, or participated in these proceedings. There was no doubt a good deal of confusion and uncertainty of belief. The same persons were more or less sanguine at different times. Those baptized by John were, no doubt, generally pretty firm in their belief in Christ. The people generally espoused his cause with more or less interest and feeling. "*The common people heard him gladly.*" "*The world was gone after him;*" and the opposition of the official few "*prevailed nothing.*"

The grand and triumphant entry into the city of Jerusalem, a few days before, had established his great popularity with the people beyond question. It was a spontaneous uprising of the people, in great and overflowing masses, with constant and loud declarations on every hand of his high claims to the great Messiahship of their religion. The thronging multitudes met him, perhaps, some miles from the city, and his grand entry was of the most popular,

sublime, and triumphal character. He went immediately to the temple, taking formal and unresisted possession of it, and proclaiming it as "my Father's house." His ecclesiastical authority was apparently unlimited and unquestioned. In their way, and according to the custom of those times, everybody seemed to strive to do him the greatest reverence and the highest honor.

So thorough and uniform was this uprising and demonstration on the part of the teeming masses in and around the city, that the Sanhedrim and their friends durst not attempt to interpose their authority to check the popular applause.

And as to the circumstances of the trial and crucifixion, we see at the first glance that the whole affair was conducted both *hastily and secretly*, "*for fear of the people.*"

"Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people." Matt. xxvi. 3-5.

Here we have the Sanhedrim, seventy or less in number, assembled hastily for this specified purpose. But "*not on the feast-day,*" they say. Why not? It was a long-established custom for such things to be done at the time of one of the principal feasts. The answer is, "*Lest there be an uproar among the people;*" lest the people rise in insurrection and overpower the Sanhedrim, and rescue Jesus. Hence they consulted—managed, adroitly—by subtilty. Doddridge paraphrases thus: "Their plan was to dispatch the matter in haste, and with the least possible amount of noise. They entered into a secret conspiracy, and consulted how they might privately take Jesus by some artifice, without giving an alarm to his friends, and might put him

to death as soon as possible, which, one way or other, they were determined to do. But they had such an apprehension of his interest in the people, that some of them were rather for delaying it, and said it will be more advisable to wait till after the passover, and not attempt to seize him at the feast, while there is such a concourse in the city from all parts; lest the design that we have formed against him should be discovered, and, considering how popular he is, there should be a tumult raised among the people, either to rescue him from our hands, or to revenge his death."

And this is the only reason I can see why they needed the services of Judas. Certainly, it could have been no difficult thing to arrest Jesus publicly in the street, as they would any other man. But this they were afraid to do. They desired to take him privately, in some retired, out-of-the-way place, to avoid public attention. And hence the need of the services of some private, intimate friend, to betray him into their hands at night, in a private and secret way.

The arrest and trial were caused by the Sanhedrim and a few priests, and by them alone, and in opposition to the great body of the Jewish people.

Schauffen, in his very beautiful *Meditations on the Last Days of Christ*, states the matter very correctly: "Ah! the matter fares miserably for the Jews. The sun rises higher and higher; the holy feast draws near; two courts of justice (so called) have, on the whole, pronounced the defendant innocent; and yet he must be dispatched *soon*; for if his numerous friends learn that he is on trial, they may inquire into the matter, and then the venerable Sanhedrim will appear to no singular advantage. It is plain they must prevail on *Pilate* now to kill him; and succeed they *must*, or their character and influence are at an end."

The band of Roman soldiers were merely in the dis-

charge of military duty, and are not presumed to have had any personal interest in the matter.

It seems clear, therefore, that up to the time of the crucifixion, there was no considerable number of the Jewish people opposed to the teachings of John or Christ, or to the Messiahship of the latter. A few officials, particularly the Sanhedrim, were the opposers of Christ.

The actual crucifixion produced a wonderful change, or rather a wonderful disappointment. "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." This must have been the sentiment of the great body of the Jews. "*The chief priests and our rulers*"—not the people—"delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him." The crucifixion disappointed their hopes, and filled them with sadness and inexplicable dismay. And the reported resurrection increased the mystery, and raised the hopes of many. And then the reëpearance, on three several occasions, unraveled the mystery, and made nearly every thing plain to those to whom the reëpearance was made. But these persons were probably only a few hundred altogether; the rest of the world being then, as now, dependent on the evidences of human testimony to raise a presumption, and the surer workings of the Holy Ghost to demonstrate the knowledge that, after all, Jesus was and is the Christ.

I purposely place human testimony in that subordinate position—the highest it deserves to be placed in, in my judgment, because I do not believe that *any* human testimony can *demonstrate* the truth of Christianity. Applied to Christ's resurrection and the inspiration of Scripture, miracles and prophecy, if proved, prove the truth of religion in a general way; yet human testimony has, in my judgment, been made to perform very far beyond its capabilities.

Now, the great question of Christ wore a very different aspect from what it had ever before presented to the Hebrew mind. It was no longer a prospective question of fact, growing out of the Hebrew ecclesiastical polity, but a great subjective truth, embodying that whole polity itself.

The expression in the twenty-fifth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew, cannot be construed so as to set aside the above reasoning. It says: "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us and on our children."

In the twentieth verse it is said, "But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus."

The expression, "the multitude," in the twentieth verse, and "all the people" in the twenty-fifth, can refer only to such persons as chanced to be then in the court-room—at most only a handful, perhaps a hundred or two, whom the chief priests had brought there and "persuaded;" evidently the friends of the priests. Christ's friends had withdrawn in despair, if, indeed, any of them were permitted to be present at the trial.

And now, is there any evidence that, in the circumstances of the trial and crucifixion, there was any complicity in it, among the Jews, beyond the Sanhedrim and a few—very few—of their adherents—those immediately and personally present? It cannot for a moment be presumed that any considerable number of the Jewish people knew any thing of the crucifixion until after it occurred. Perhaps not one-fiftieth part of the Jews were at that time in or near the city of Jerusalem; and from all we learn of the history of the case—the very secret and hasty manner in which it was conducted—it is not likely that one in fifty of those knew of it until after it was all over. Let any man look carefully into these circumstances.

Mr. Kennedy, in his *Messianic Prophecy*, page 450, makes what is perhaps a very proper remark on this point. He says: "By this time the Sanhedrim have collected all the enemies of Jesus, and all the rabble with whom they have influence, about Pilate's house, in order to make their demand appear to be the wish of the people."

This is exceedingly natural and according to the history. The Sanhedrim, or a majority thereof, and a handful of rabble, with a few priests, were the opponents of Christ, and procured his arrest and crucifixion; while the great mass of people were his friends. This is the history.

Josephus says the condemnation and crucifixion of Christ by Pilate, was "at the suggestion of the principal men among us." Ant., Book XVIII., ch. 3. That accords precisely with the evangelical account. *The principal men*—not the people.

In John xviii. 3, it is expressly stated that Judas acted on behalf of "the chief priests and Pharisees"—not the Jewish people generally. In John xviii. 12, it is said: "Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound him." The "band and the captain" were Roman soldiers—the "officers of the Jews" were such priests and officials of the Sanhedrim as were then present and assisted in or instigated the arrest. But no mention is made of any considerable number of Jewish people being interested in it.

In John xviii. 40, it is said: "Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man but Barabbas." Now what does "*all*" refer to? Evidently all the little crowd then around the door of Pilate's house. In John xix. 6, "When the chief priests therefore, and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him." *The chief priests and officers*—they were the men who urged and conducted the affair throughout. In John xix. 15, it is said, "*The chief priests* answered, We have no king but Cæsar;" and nowhere is there any

allusion made to *the people* as participating in the persecution in any way, but whenever they are mentioned, the allusion is to their opposition to these measures.

If, therefore, you examine carefully into every place where this subject is alluded to, it will be seen that, in the first place, no such mention of Jews is made anywhere as could apply to several millions of people, or even to any considerable number of those then in the city of Jerusalem; but, secondly, the entire drift of all the statements and descriptions go to show that those Jews who were urging the trial and conviction were members of the Sanhedrim, some of the priests, and other officials, and such small number of people as were found acting with them. This last number could be but few, because, at most, only a very few people could be personally present anywhere, and acting personally in any such matter; and there is not, anywhere, the least hint that those persons were representing the will or wishes of the Jews generally, or any considerable portion of them. Indeed, the inference is clear and necessary that they were acting in very high opposition to the great mass of the Jewish people. And yet Dr. Doddridge strangely tells us, Acts vi. 14, that Jesus was crucified "with the concurrence of the whole Jewish people."

CHAPTER XXX.

DID THE JEWS REJECT CHRIST? CONTINUED IN AN EXAMINATION OF THE PARTICULAR CONDITION OF THE CHURCH AT AND AFTER THE ASCENSION.

FROM what is already said, the conclusion is inevitable that, up to the time of the death of Christ, the Jewish people—much the largest portion of them—were at least favorably disposed toward Jesus. Indeed, the historic accounts do by no means warrant the belief that any very considerable number of the Jews opposed him. All the opposition to him which we read of, was from the officials and a few others.

But there are several considerations which must be borne carefully in mind :

First. What was the question about Jesus upon which the Jews differed? I answer, simply this: *Was he the Christ of their religion?* Prior to this time all the Jews were Christians. Nothing can be better settled than this. That is, the entire faith and hope of the Church rested on *Christ*—Christ as portrayed by the prophets. And now the question arises, Is Jesus this Christ?

Secondly. Up to this period this question could not be *definitively settled* in the mind of any one. The farthest any one could go was, to be more or less thoroughly convinced in his mind that he was. The proper and only certitude of

this fact, as all Christians well know, was his resurrection and ascension.

Thirdly. His death and the manner of it shocked the faith of the stoutest of the apostles—that is, their faith in Jesus had not been fully established. Their belief gave way. They were all—all shocked, dismayed, confounded, amazed. But this is no evidence of infidelity. Lack of belief *in Jesus* could not now, nor of course previously, be counted apostasy.

Fourthly. Looking at the Church, then, as the chief inhabitants of Palestine, and being spread away out beyond Palestine almost over the known world, it is not probable that practical questions about Jesus pressed themselves home to any great degree upon all the Jews. Indeed, seeing that he preached but about three years, and that altogether in central Palestine—that the means of intercourse was very slow and sparse—I do not see that it is at all certain that all the living Jews, or the half of them, had ever heard of Jesus before this time; though in Judea and close around there, he was, as before described, very well and very popularly known.

And, let one other consideration be borne in mind—that so far as Jews were concerned, there was, in those days, no such thing as *joining the Church*. They were all already in the Church. The only question was, who stayed in and who went out. I would not take upon me to say, however, that on the day of Pentecost, or indeed at any other time, none joined the Church. But on this point we have no historic information. Those who were Jews, and who then and there gave in their adhesion to Christ, did not *join the Church*, because they were already in it. They all, apostles and all, now or about this time, did a very proper and necessary thing *in the Church*, viz., they gave the proper and appropriate evidence of their *faith*—now it was faith—

that Jesus was verily and truly Christ. Before this time no one even had *faith in Jesus*. That could not be. And even after the resurrection, no one could be said to have *faith in Jesus*, or apostatize from him, until an opportunity offered, and the question of Jesus's claims to the Messiahship were fairly presented. The resurrection had but just then happened, and many had not heard of it, and many others had heard only rumors about it.

When we inquire, therefore, whether these or those Jews rejected Christ, the meaning is, after they had had a fair opportunity to know of the resurrection, did they receive and embrace Jesus by faith as the Christ in whom they had always believed? If they did, then they continued to be Christians; and if they did not, then having formerly professed him by professing the Christ of prophecy, he being the same Christ, of course they apostatized from him and rejected him.

And we must remember, the history is exceeding brief and incomplete in its explanations. Thousands of things occurred which are not mentioned. Of the first rallying around the standard of the risen Jesus, no particular mention is made. We have no allusion even to the particular instance or instances; nor do we know at all how many there were. We are obliged to believe that before the day which, to distinguish it, we call Pentecost, and after the resurrection, the apostles at least, and whether a few or thousands more; we know not, had publicly banded themselves together, by solemn, mutual profession, that Jesus had risen according to the Scriptures, and that he was the Christ of their faith, in whom they had always believed.

Very soon after the ascension, they held in Jerusalem what was called an ecclesiastical council, preparatory to the election of an apostle in the stead of Judas. This is what is generally understood by the hundred and twenty

mentioned in Acts i. 15. The meaning could hardly be that there were merely one hundred and twenty persons there who professed faith in Jesus. It was a meeting of one hundred and twenty ministers. This constituted a regular council in these times, for the transaction of any important Church business. We would naturally infer that a council of this sort was held to elect the new apostle.

It is quite likely that on the very day of the ascension there was a considerable manifestation of decided faith in Jesus. This was no doubt very informally done, but just then we would naturally look for a considerable rallying of the friends of Jesus, now perfectly convinced of the verity of his Messiahship. The feast of Pentecost was approaching—perhaps not far distant. The Church was awake and astir. Great events were rapidly passing. The friends of Jesus rallied on this unlooked-for and joyous occasion. Up to this time there was nothing seriously disturbing the unity of the Churches, though there was in the Church very strong contention about Jesus—whether he was Christ or not.

And so here we have a nucleus—a few in the Church, at the first time it could be done, openly and avowedly, by the grace of God, under the superintendence of the Holy Ghost, settled this question at least for themselves. This, in the nature of things, was a new question. It could not possibly arise until now. And, moreover, it could be fairly and understandingly presented only to such as had had large opportunities of seeing Jesus, his preaching, and his miracles. And in a form in which the question could be definitively settled, it is now for the first time presented, and necessarily to a few, as compared with the whole Church.

The Church was at this moment in a very anomalous, though a very natural condition. In the nature of things they could not be otherwise, unless Jesus Christ had made his appearance in the days of Adam.

We see that a nucleus was first formed in the Church, and among the members thereof, on the ground of *faith in the risen Jesus*, he being the same identical Christ in whom they had all always believed. And now others, and others, and still others, rallied by the same profession of the same faith.

But how many besides the apostles were thus openly associated, before they were joined by the three thousand soon afterward spoken of, we have no information. Considering the condition of the Church then in and around the city, we might naturally infer that there might have been several hundreds, or probably thousands.

Now, outside this nucleus, or company, in the Church, thus associated, what was necessarily the condition of the entire Church in Jerusalem, and everywhere else, in relation to this particular vital point—the question of faith in Jesus? Their condition was simply this, that they had not decided it at all. They could not do so until fully and fairly informed about it. They neither believed nor disbelieved in the risen Jesus. Some knew a good deal about it, and were more or less strongly inclined to this side or to that; and then there were others away off who had perhaps never heard of Jesus at all, or had not heard of his death, or his reported resurrection.

This was the attitude of affairs when Acts ii. 5, begins to inform us of the preliminaries to the great uprising of the Church on the memorable day of Pentecost. We must look at the state of things that existed, and not imagine a state of things that did not exist.

Most of the Jewish people were not then in Jerusalem, nor near there; and many who were there had just arrived in the city, and with no reliable means of certain information about Jesus, they were quite unprepared to settle down in any belief about many things they no doubt heard

respecting him. Christianity does not come by intuition—it rests upon information.

And then there were others—thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of Jews—living at a distance, and in the nooks and corners of neighborhoods, far and near, and even in the city, who, as yet, had heard little or nothing about the resurrection of Jesus; and so they could not have a settled belief about it. Nor could they exercise faith in the thing upon mere reports and rumors. They required as much solid foundation for their faith as we do now for ours. They all believed in Christ; but now the vital question arises, Is Jesus the Christ?

At the preaching which now took place, it is said that “there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” We are now perhaps better prepared to understand this remark. It is in precise keeping with what had previously taken place with others. About three thousand made the same kind of declaration of faith in and adherence to Jesus, acknowledging him as Christ, as those had previously done. The great outpouring of the Holy Spirit previously mentioned, roused the Church and waked up the people greatly on the subject.

The common notion seems to be, that these three thousand were then and there converted in the ordinary sense of Christian conversion, and many suppose that they then joined the Church. Joined what Church? They were already in the Church, every one of them, for aught that we know, and had been all their lives. They certainly did not then join the Church; and as to their being converted, we have no information on that point. It is nevertheless altogether probable that on such an occasion many of them were then converted. It would seem strange if it were not so. But on the other hand, it would be out of the question to suppose that so many persons—all members of the Church—

were unconverted. Indeed, they are mentioned in the history under the general designation of "devout men." The mass of them were undoubtedly pious people.

This believing in Jesus, and acknowledging him as the Christ, had necessarily nothing to do with conversion. When they were converted, *that* question did not and could not arise. This was undoubtedly the case with the apostles and several others who are mentioned. They were converted, and were among the most pious men that ever lived before they believed any thing about a risen Jesus. Unlike other Christians who lived either before or after that period, this question about Jesus, and the evidences whether he was or was not Christ, arose *in the course of their religious lives*.

So that in the nature of things, there was just as much necessity for this adherence to Jesus then, and an acknowledgment of him, on the part of converted persons who had been solidly pious for years, as for one just then converted, or one converted now.

Ante-Messianic Christians had, of course, nothing to do with the particular question of Jesus; and with post-Messianic Christians, the question of Christ and of Jesus is presented as one single question. But to those Christians who lived both before and after the resurrection, the case is peculiar. They first believed in Christ generally—all there was to be believed in—and then after the resurrection, so soon as the fact could be brought fairly and authoritatively before them, they must, to continue to be Christians, believe and confess him also.

This many of the pious people of that day did. First, the twelve apostles and many nearly associated with them—we know not how many—did, and on this memorable occasion "about three thousand" did the same thing.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DID THE JEWS REJECT CHRIST? CONTINUED IN AN EXAMINATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH FOR THIRTY YEARS OR SO SUBSEQUENT TO THE RESURRECTION.

KEEPING carefully in view the considerations mentioned in the last chapter, we are now prepared to look at a few items in the history of the Church, such as we find in Scripture, and to ascertain therefrom whether the Jews—"all except a few," or "almost to a man," or what probable proportion of them—rejected Jesus Christ as the Saviour; or whether a portion—some respectable portion as to numbers or otherwise—did not acknowledge and heartily receive Jesus as the Christ in whom they formerly believed. Let the reader have patience.

The reader will now please to bear in mind—until I notify him otherwise—that all the friends and followers of Christ—apostles and all—which I shall mention, were all Jews—every one.

In the next previous chapter we have seen that "about three thousand" Jews, on the day of Pentecost—and how many before—since the resurrection, we know not—acknowledged Jesus as Christ, and were "steadfast" in their adhesion to him. We have, then, at least that number to begin with, or rather, to proceed with.

And in Acts ii. 47, it is said that Christ's doctrine "found

favor with all the people," and that "the Lord added to the Church daily," etc. The word Church, we should remember, was not then used in the sense in which we now use it. Literally it meant company, or assembly, or association, or fraternity, or brotherhood, and was applied as well to secular as to religious associations. In this instance it denoted those persons in or among the Church or Jewish people who, as before explained, were associated in the faith that the crucified and risen Jesus was the true Christ. "Added daily"—this must mean that this association under the banner of Jesus was rapidly increasing, as opportunity was afforded to other and still other Jewish people.

In Acts iv. 4, it is said: "Many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand."

This verse has been strangely construed by some. They think this accession increased the whole number to five thousand. The language is very clear; it relates a separate and distinct occasion. "Many which heard the word"—evidently meaning then and there—"believed;" and the number of the *men*, τῶν ἀνδρῶν—not of all who then believed—was about five thousand, without counting women—if there were any—which would seem at least probable.

Those who regard these occasions as mere instances of ordinary revival of religion, of persons being converted and joining the Church, and according to their experience in such matters, think that five thousand was almost too large a number to join the Church at one time, and are willing to let down the plain language used to mean that at that time the whole number of believers amounted to five thousand. This is a short-sighted view of the matter. Instead thereof, it was the early rallying of the great Church of Israel to the great fact, just now for the first time presented to the eye and the acceptance of the Church, *that the risen Jesus*

was their Christ; and the sacred writer is noting briefly and incidentally how rapidly the Church gave in its adhesion to this great and vital fact. They rallied by thousands—by three thousands, by five thousands, and “daily,” and “many,” by “multitudes,” and by “myriads,” as we shall see.

Acts iv. 21: “So when they had farther threatened them they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people;” and farther: “for all men glorified God for that which was done.”

This does not mean literally *all men*; for those priests and rulers, and as many as sided with them, did not glorify God for the resurrection of Jesus, and the consequent glorious brightening of the prospects of the Church. But the phrase *all men* cannot mean less than that the doctrine of Christ was popular in the Church, and that its friends were rapidly rallying.

Acts iv. 34: “And the multitude of them that believed,” etc. The only words in common use then expressive of numbers in a high degree were *multitude* and *thousand*; and these words—especially the former—are very frequently brought into requisition in describing these scenes.

Acts v. 14: “And believers were the more added to the Lord; multitudes, both of men and women.”

Acts v. 26, in speaking of the imprisonment of the Apostles Peter and John, it is said: “Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.” *Without violence*, means without force. When the apostles found they were summoned by the Sanhedrim—recognizing its ecclesiastical authority—they went without compulsion; but *the people* being so much opposed to their molestations and persecutions on the part of the rulers, priests, etc., were to be *feared*, lest the officers executing the commands of the high priest might be stoned in a tumult.

Doddridge says: "For the people were so fully persuaded of a Divine power engaged with the apostles, that they held their persons sacred, and would not have borne any open attack upon them." Benson copies Doddridge *verbatim*. Clarke says: "The officers, on reaching the temple, found the multitude gladly receiving the doctrine of the apostles; and so intent on hearing *all the words of this life*, that they were afraid to show any hostility to the apostles, lest the people should stone them."

Acts v. 42: "And daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." *In the temple*—showing that their ecclesiastical relations remained intact. And it was a "daily" business.

The estrangement in the Church, which began to manifest itself three years before, when Jesus began to preach, had now become separation, and, among those most nearly engaged in it, hostility. There began to be two distinct parties. These received Jesus, and those rejected him. But rejecting can be fairly affirmed only where it was done deliberately, with full knowledge of all the facts.

The sixth chapter of Acts opens with an account of the increase of the believers in Jesus to such an extent, that additional deacons were necessary. It shows also that this increase was not confined to the Jews of Judea, or even of Palestine; but that it extended away, away among the Hellenists and Grecians.

Acts vi. 7, is very significant: "And the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." I am not able to concur in the surprise I see frequently expressed by commentators and others, that so many of the *priests* should believe in Jesus: the wonder with me is that more of them did not do so—that so many of them rejected Christ.

"Multiplied greatly," and "a great company of the priests" gave in their adhesion. This does not look as though the Jews were "forsaken of God;" that "all but a few," "nearly all," "almost to a man," rejected Christ. If nothing were said on this point but this one verse, it would show that at least a considerable number of Jews received him.

Acts viii. 4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere, preaching the word"—waking up the Church to a recognition of their Saviour; to a proper understanding of their own religion; to an acknowledgment of the great religious fact, which not until now had become a fact.

Acts viii. 6: "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke." Very strong language! Doddridge says it means "unanimously attended to those things which Philip spoke." And remember, they were all Jews—every one. Benson copies Doddridge. Samaria, it will be remembered, where this preaching was done by Philip, and where the Jews "unanimously attended to," or "with one accord gave heed," etc., was one of the largest cities in Palestine.

In Acts viii. 7, the word "many" is twice used in the same connection; and in Acts viii. 8, it is said: "And there was great joy in that city." It was no small matter—the rallying to the standard of Jesus by the Jews of this city was not confined to "a few."

Acts viii. 14: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." Samaria was a large city. It is not, I presume, intended to mean that all the people believed in Jesus; but it could scarcely mean less than that the doctrine was very popular there; at least, it is said that "there was great joy in that city" in consequence.

Acts viii. 40: "But Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Cesarea." *In all the cities*—while the apostles and many others must have been doing the same elsewhere.

Acts ix. introduces Saul—how he breathed out threatenings, and "desired letters to Damascus to the synagogues." By this time the Jewish officials had so planted themselves against the doctrine of Jesus being Christ, and had fought so hard against it, and it had nevertheless so increased on their hands, that it had, even now, become a matter of great national concern. "A very few," indeed! The power of the priests in maintaining that Jesus was an impostor, was now in great danger of being overridden by the force of numbers, so prevalent was the doctrine of Jesus.

Damascus was not in Palestine, but a long way off in Syria, and the fear that the authority of the Sanhedrim—great as was its authority—would be subjugated by popular force, was so great, that they commissioned Saul—one of the very first and most powerful men in the nation—to go to Syria and try if he could not arrest the progress of this thing. But Saul not only did not arrest it, but became its great champion and propagator.

In Acts ix. 31, it is said: "Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." This language implies that the Jews in some large numbers were acknowledging Jesus.

Acts ix. 35: "And all that dwelt in Lydda and Saron saw him, (Peter,) and turned to the Lord." "*All*" that dwelt in those towns; not, I presume, meaning every one, literally, but the great mass. Lydda was a considerable city, and Saron, or Sharon, was the name of both a town and region of country. I do not know which is alluded to

Acts ix. 42: "And it was known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord."

We must now pause and review our ground a moment. We are now about to approach the preaching to Cornelius by Peter, and are probably about fifteen years from the resurrection—the true time. The chronology is known to be about three years shorter than the true time, just at this point.

I notified the reader that I would inform him when discipleship with Jesus came from beyond the pale of the Church strictly. We are now at that point. We have, however, by no means done with *Jewish Christians*, for many, many multitudes of Jews came forward and gave in their adhesion to Jesus after this; but from this point forward, those out of the Church joined themselves with the disciples likewise; that is, the preachers went out of the Church and preached to everybody. But I ask the reader to look back over the ground we have now traveled, and see if some goodly portion of *the Jews* have not acknowledged Jesus Christ by faith. At this point the entire Church—the believing, apostolic part of it—were Jews, without an exception; and at this time the Church must have embraced considerable numbers. Considering the whole amount of Jews, which are generally estimated at about six or seven millions, the language I have quoted—considering, too, that it is merely incidental, and by no means intended to give specific information as to numbers—can but warrant the belief that, up to this period, the apostolic Church must have numbered hundreds of thousands, if not millions. As to there being "a few," "very few," it is not too much to say that such expressions are ridiculous. Dr. Nevin enumerates *two* Jews who received Jesus, and says there were "others." Such remarks from men of learning are out of all character. But let us proceed a little farther.

Acts xi. 19-21: "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only." "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." And these were "Jews only." And in Acts xi. 24, it is said of the preaching of Barnabas at Antioch: "And much people was added unto the Lord."

The first allusion we have to discipleship from without the Church is most probably in Acts xi. 26; and in Acts xii. 24, we have the incidental remark, that "the word of God grew and multiplied."

When Paul preached first at Antioch, his auditory seem to have been mostly Jews, as his address to them was: "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience." And again: "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham."

In Acts xiii. 44, it is said: "And the next sabbath-day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." This was a mixed audience of Jews and others.

Acts xiv. 1: "And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together (Paul and Barnabas) into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed."

And the reader should also bear in mind, that when Jews and others are spoken of as *believing*, the same thing is by no means to be understood in both cases. The Jews already believed in the Old Testament, however well or ill they—any particular ones—may have understood it; and so they believed in *Christ*. And now when they are said to *believe*, the meaning is that they believe in *Jesus* as Christ. But others than Jews, not being understood to believe in revealed religion at all, are now understood to entertain and believe in the whole subject primarily.

Acts xviii. 4: And so it is said that Paul, at Corinth, "reasoned in the synagogues every Sabbath-day, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ." And in Acts xviii. 19, Paul "reasoned with the Jews." So that still the work was mostly among the Jews.

Acts xix. 17: "And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also, dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." And Acts xx. 21: "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

In Acts xxi. 30, we have a very important remark, throwing much light on the subject now under consideration. Paul was now at Jerusalem, with the other apostles, having returned from an extensive tour in the north and west, and had given an account of his labors, ministry, and the manner in which the Messiahship of Jesus was received. "And when they heard it," (the account continues,) "they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe." Now, this word which we translate *thousands*, means *ten thousands*, or *myriads*. We should read it, *how many ten-thousands*, or *how many myriads*. The meaning is, an immense, countless number. The language they used is put to its utmost capacity to express very great numbers. The word *million* is of more recent origin.

How, then, can it be said that *the Jews denied Christ*? We are told they were all the bitterest enemies of Jesus and the apostles—"all but a few," "nearly all," "almost to a man," and many like expressions. The writer of the Acts exhausts all the synonyms—what few there were—in the language he used, expressive of high numbers, in describing and oft

repeating the great number of Jews who, so soon as reasonable opportunity offered, gave in their adhesion to the doctrine of the Messiahship of Jesus promptly and heartily.

Observations of this sort might be greatly extended if necessary. There are many other expressions in Acts, and many in the Epistles, which go to show that a very large number of Jews identified themselves with Christ, declaring and believing in favor of the risen Jesus. The world was gone after him. If we let him thus go, all men will believe on him. The apostles turned the world upside down in recommending his doctrines; and of the great power of the Sanhedrim it was said: "Behold how ye prevail nothing." "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." And many other remarks, either hyperbolic, or of an extremely elevated character, might be cited in support of the position here taken.

And then on the other hand, what is there in the Acts which goes to show that the Jews "nearly all," "all but a few," "almost to a man," rejected the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship? There is nothing. Of course, if there is any thing of this sort in Scripture at all, it must be in Acts or the Epistles. I have carefully examined every passage—as any one may easily do—and the simple truth is, that not only is there no expression going to show that nearly all the Jews rejected Christ, but indeed there is none which states—by any fair explication—that *any very large number did so*.

I do not by any means state that no very large number of Jews did reject Christ; I only say that this is not stated in Scripture.

The reader, in making this examination, will frequently meet with the expression, "*the Jews*." "The Jews" did or said so and so. But if this expression be examined in every case, it will be seen that wherever it is connected with opposition to Jesus or the apostles, it in no instance refers

to the Jewish people generally, or any considerable number of them, but is always a local remark, referring to such Jews as were then and there present, and could therefore mean but a very few at most; or—as it does in several places—to the Jewish officials. A thing done by their Sanhedrim was frequently said to have been done by “the Jews;” and “the Jews” frequently means the officials, the Sanhedrim. This is the case in John vii. 1.

I conclude, therefore, that by any fair explication of language, the Scriptures do not state that any considerable proportion of the whole Jewish people, amounting to a majority, or even a large minority, ever did oppose Christ, his preaching, his Messiahship, or his apostles, or had any concern with his death.

Secondly. It is nevertheless abundantly true, from many unmistakable considerations outside of the Scriptures, that a very large number of Jews did refuse to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus, and did oppose the doctrines and preaching of the apostles. *The Church divided*, and both parties were large; but which party was the larger, and which the smaller, no man can say with any certainty.

But for my own part, after a careful examination of all the facts stated, I consider it highly probable that, of the Jews living at the time of the death of Christ, a majority acknowledged Jesus; that is, they did so so soon as they had reasonable opportunity to consider and fairly and rationally decide so important a question.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE JEWISH SEPARATION AND ADHERENCE, AND THE PERIOD NECESSARY TO IT.

WE have seen that the Jews who were living at the time of the death of Christ, and who then formed what is generally known as the Jewish Church, *divided* into two separate associations, parties, or communities. And we have seen why they divided—upon what question they split; and we can but see that the whole proceeding was very natural. If we imagine ourselves to be then present, and suppose the people to be natural people, acting rationally, moved by such impulses—truth and error—as usually influence men, and noticing the movings and impulses of religion on the one hand, and of selfish ambition and worldly-mindedness on the other, the whole subject will be freed from all mystery, and the natural workings of religion and irreligion—of truth and error—will appear as natural as any fact seen anywhere else in the history of human affairs.

According to many writers, this portion of the world's history is too artificial—too stiff and unnatural. The scenes are—many of them, at least—too mechanical, drawn with a pencil too exclusively literary and scholastic for common-sense readers. The historic Scriptures, particularly at this point, are too often read as though they

were intended merely to give us historic information of all that happened, and for the mere sake of the historic account; whereas, much of the historic Scriptures of the New Testament is not very historic.

The Gospels are historic of many incidents in the life of the Saviour; and the Acts of the Apostles is almost the only history of the Church for half a century or more afterward. But in a strictly literary sense, *The Acts of the Apostles* is a misnomer. It relates but very little of the acts of the twelve apostles. Indeed, it mentions very little about them. A very few things are briefly alluded to of two or three of them, while the great, valuable, and incessant labors of most of them—labors and incidents which must have formed the great body of the history of the Church—are not so much as alluded to. Suppose we had the principal ministerial acts of the apostles written out—what effects it would produce no man can tell. The lack of a more minute history of the Church in those times was not, I presume, accidental. In an ordinary history, only a few things are attempted to be described, but here we have not even an outline. The things to be included and excluded turned upon different questions than those we would have raised. The many things excluded were no doubt purposely left out. The history written was not for the exaltation of the men who figured in it, but for wiser and better ends.

Very many things which, in themselves, must have possessed the greatest imaginable importance at the time, are wholly unnoticed.

So that in using those records for our advantage now, we must do so in the exercise of a sound discretion and an enlightened judgment. On the one hand, we must guard against mere suppositions, or an unsupported imagination of what might have happened; and on the other, an

exclusive reliance on the mere verbiage, as if nothing occurred but what is particularly mentioned.

The question on which the Church divided was as natural and rational as could be imagined. It must necessarily arise at some time, and in precisely the form it is now presented. Jesus was a young man amongst them, and whatever peculiarities there might have been about him, whatever claims to the Messiahship he might have put forth, or might have lacked, in the judgment of any, the question was an open one, and must be settled; and be settled not by the Church merely, but by each individual person. This question was precisely the same then it is now. No man can be a Christian now until he first believe the general doctrine of Christ, and then believe that Jesus is Christ. And, as above explained, no man could believe, finally and conclusively, that Jesus was Christ until after the resurrection.

This question first presented itself to those who were then and there nearest about, and most cognizant of these things. But few, comparatively, of the Jews were at that time, or could be, in or around Jerusalem. There may have been fifty or one hundred thousand in and around the city.

Nothing could be more natural at that time, and in those circumstances, than the dispute about Jesus. The members of the great council, as the Sanhedrim was called, were in office, and loved their positions; and the chief priests, whether members of the great council or not, loved theirs; and Jesus claimed supreme ecclesiastical authority, and the people vehemently claimed it for him. Make not, said he, my Father's house a house of merchandise. By what authority doest thou these things? they inquired of him. I will ask you one question, said he, about the ministry and preaching of John: Was that by

divine direction, or was it a set of mere human opinions? Answer that question, and that will give you an answer to yours. John preached that the Christ was now present, and on at least one occasion he pointed out his identical personality. Was that ministry true? Answer me. But, poor, short-sighted men, they could not. And instead of trying to reply according to *truth*, they tried according to *expediency*. If we say it was true, we thereby condemn ourselves at once, for the farther question will thereupon arise, Why then do you not receive the Christ he pointed out? But if we say the preaching of John was not divine, then we encounter the fierce opposition of the people, for the people are clamorous in favor of John's preaching, and of the Christ which he announced. And so the great Sanhedrim flatly surrendered all logical, reasonable, and debatable ground, and threw themselves back upon their mere official power.

They ignorantly supposed that an acknowledgment of the authority which Jesus claimed, would strip them of their authority. But this was not necessarily so, by any means. He had nothing against the Sanhedrim as such. It was neither wrong nor out of place. It exercised, in the main, about such ecclesiastical authority as usually is understood to belong to the supreme Church judicatory, by whatever name it may be called. The same kind of a court, mainly, and mixture of court and legislature—that is, a body exercising both legislative and judicial powers—modified more or less in external form, has continued in the Church from that day to this. The Sanhedrim, as it then existed, had by no means so much of precedent as subsequent. In the form we there see, it is not traceable, I believe, back historically over about sixty-nine or seventy years.

There was no objection to the Sanhedrim. If the men

composing it had acknowledged Christ, it might have continued uninterruptedly; and the same functions, authority, jurisdiction, did continue.

These men were ambitious of office, and so opposed the Saviour; and though "the people" were opposed to them, they could still gather some numerical strength from their personal friends and hangers-on. It is strange they could not secure more.

Here the breach began. The officials thought that by getting the Roman authority to crucify Jesus, that that would be the end of it. But in this they were in a great mistake. They managed their cause along through the scenes of the resurrection in an awkward and bungling manner, it is true, but as well as they could. And now, having taken this strong ground, they could not recede without, as they regarded it, entire disgrace, and the loss of every thing to them; and so they rallied their forces and pushed matters to the utmost extremes.

They declared the believers in Christ heretics, because, as they declared, he was only a false Christ. And the believers in Jesus clung the closer to him. And so those preachers who sided with the officials sustained them, and preached the more against Jesus; while those who sided with Jesus and the apostles sustained them, and preached Jesus and the resurrection. And the strife extended, and the feeling deepened and widened; and others, and still others, more at a distance, both geographically and morally, were drawn in from time to time, and from year to year, until every Jew then living took decided ground on this side or on that.

There was no other question but this one. There was no difference between the parties about the Church, its form, organization, jurisdiction, nor any thing of the sort. The believers in Jesus, of course, unchurched the others, and

vice versa. Here there was no debatable ground. It is apparent, and was then, that whichever party was right about Jesus being the Christ, was right, and constituted the Church, and the other party was *out*. The only vital question in religion is Christ. Before the resurrection, it was simply Christ; but since then, Jesus must be acknowledged to be Christ.

And so the question deepened, and spread, and intensified. On all hands the question was seen and acknowledged to be vitally important. It divided families, friends, and associations, and still continued to deepen. The Jewish officials thought that by maintaining their *official* status, that would maintain the Church; and the Christian party thought that that would make no difference—that the Church must follow the true religion.

And the people followed their personal inclinations just as natural people would in such circumstances. Many took a warm interest in the matter at the first—that is, those near at hand. I see nothing whatever to weaken or disparage the belief that those persons baptized by John took sides with the apostles. Their baptism certainly placed them there, and if they maintained the doctrine of their baptism, and did not backslide from the vow of that baptism, of which I see no intimation in Scripture, then they were of the apostolic party.

But however this may be, the parties arrayed themselves against each other at a very early period, and the strife widened and deepened; and it is apparent it could not terminate in a day, nor in any short time. While some took a deep interest in the contest, and took ground promptly, others naturally felt less interest in it, and did not bring themselves to a decision so rapidly.

At the first they were all in the same synagogues, and here this party, and there that, may have predominated.

Outwardly, ostensibly, legally, they all occupied the same ecclesiastical position, and were all members of their respective synagogues, the same after as before this question about Jesus arose.

But man's nature, prejudices, and propensities forbid that they should long remain so. They never *agreed* to separate. There was no *formal* separation. There was never a time when the two parties were together on one day and separate on the next. The separation was natural—not artificial. Each claimed to believe and to preach the truth about Jesus—the one that he was an impostor, and the other that he was Christ; and the preachers were the leaders of their respective parties. There were hundreds of preachers on either side from the first. Not at the very first, for at the very first “all the disciples forsook him and fled.” But they soon rallied, and formed a powerful nucleus and a strong party.

But at this time most of the Jews were at a distance, and had for a time no fair opportunity to take sides in the matter; and as the resurrection was proclaimed here and there, those becoming cognizant of the facts gave in their adhesion to them, or refused to do so. And as this process went on, and only as it went on, can it be said that the Jews became firmly and finally identified with this party or with that.

And although this question was soon carried away beyond Jerusalem—as in four, five, ten, or twenty years we hear of its agitation in distant parts—yet its preaching was confined mainly, so far as we learn, to the cities or the most central portions of the country, at least for some years.

And then it must be noted, too, that many vacillated, hesitated, believed, and turned back, and then rallied again—some of them; and then there were others who, with the

facts and doctrines of the resurrection, in Galatia and elsewhere, took up very erroneous and unscriptural notions about some religious ceremonies, which in their nature belonged to the teachings of the Church before Christ came. These persons got very much warped in their views, and disturbed the faith of others to a considerable extent.

So that, considering these things, the case, reviewed in these aspects, did not become settled among all the Jews then living—that is, they did not all adhere to this side or to that, in less than the space of perhaps twenty or thirty years or more.

We may presume, however, from all the circumstances, from what we learn in the Scriptures and out of them, that before the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans, which occurred in A.D. 70, the Jews had well and finally separated; and each party carried with it the form of the Church as it existed when they were all together—the Christian party, of course, discontinuing those practices and forms of teaching which, in their nature, pertained to the period before Messiah, and the other party continuing them.

One party or the other was certainly apostate; and, as between those parties, that question is not settled to this day. At the present hour each party claims to be the true, ancient Church; and that the one is ancient and biblical, and the other new and apostate, is philosophically certain. And, being myself a Christian, it follows that I hold that the apostolic Church is the ancient stock and true Church, and that those who reject Jesus are the new, the false, and the apostate Church.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE OLIVE-TREES OF THE ELEVENTH OF ROMANS.

By introducing the metaphor of two olive-trees, a good and a wild olive, it is apparent the author intended to make them represent two different classes of persons, in different religious conditions; and in endeavoring to get firmly and properly hold of the apostle's teaching, I think it is not too much that I insist on two points, viz.:

First. That the figurative teaching be understood in the most natural and simple way, without any far-fetched suppositions of what possibly might be; and,

Secondly. That the lesson be understood in a way that will agree with the general scope of biblical teaching.

The good, or cultivated olive-tree, represents the Church as it then existed; and the wild tree represents the other party which is always contrasted with the Church—the unbelieving world, or Gentiles, as they were generally called.

The branches that were “broken off” from the good olive-tree, were those persons in the Church who broke off from the Church by denying its central faith—the Messiahship of Jesus. Those engrafted into the good olive when the others were broken off, were those outside the Church, unbelieving, or heathen persons, who were or might be expected to join the Church.

Nothing can be more simple or plain than this. The good olive-tree stands firm and unshaken where it always grew. It did not die; it was not plucked up by the roots, nor was it cut down and cast into the fire; but it grew on; it suffered the loss of some of its branches, it is true, but that did not cause its destruction.

Or, without the figure, the Church remained standing firmly where it always stood. Some of its members left it; and that indeed was a sad thing, though it was not ruinous, because it was built upon the foundation, not of the apostles, but of the apostles and prophets conjointly. The psalmist had sung, and the prophets had prophesied, that it should stand immovably firm. But why, or upon what principles, did those branches become broken off? The answer is, "Because of unbelief they were broken off."

The heathen people, who after the atonement of Christ became visible to men, would come into the Church much more rapidly than before, were very aptly called wild branches; that is, "cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature." And so it is a sad chapter in the history of the Church, that "blindness in part is happened to Israel."

That is a plain, simple story. It is indeed melancholy enough on the one hand that "some of the branches were broken off;" but it is cheering on the other, that others of a wild stock should be "grafted in."

I cannot, therefore, agree with Dr. Olshausen, when he says that "the Gentiles were conceived of as a collective body, standing in contrast to the Jews, another collective body." That cannot be the way, it seems to me, because the Gentiles, "as a collective body," were not, and to this day have not, been grafted in. Indeed, the truth is, that a far less proportion of the Gentiles than of the Jews, as they then stood, have been brought into the religion and communion of Christ. Neither were "the Jews, as a col-

lective body," broken off. That supposition varies wide from the history, and so spoils the figure.

But all this might be looked for, perhaps, from a man who held that "the Gentile world, *as such*, was destined by God's decree to be—instead of the Jews—the support and transmitter of the divinely-appointed ordinances of salvation."

On the contrary, I do not believe that God is any respecter of persons; I do not read that he saves men by nations; I cannot see that he has decreed the English people, or the Americans, or the Germans, or any other people, "as a collective body," to be "instead" of any other people, "the support and transmitter of the divinely-appointed ordinances of salvation." He receives men only because of their fidelity and faith, personally and individually, and discards them in like manner, only "because of unbelief," and for no other reason.

The same thing said by the Saviour then, about the two parties—the Church and the world—with the same figure representing them, might be said now. I see nothing new or strange about it. The Church and the world always sustain the same relation, and God always sustains the same relation to both. There are, in God's administration of the affairs of men, no such special rules and commands of momentary application, and particular, exclusive expediency, as the fancy of some theologians sometimes causes them to discover. Such things might do for a military commander, or freakish, petulant sovereign, who did not know his own mind long at a time, and whose views and purposes were wrapped up in the changing and adventitious condition of nations and peoples; but the plans and purposes of the Almighty work on a higher, a more comprehensive and impartial scale.

Doctor Olshausen, after torturing the text through sev-

eral pages of special pleading, makes out an administrative programme which he himself would be compelled to disapprove if he had been exercising the powers of a pope, as he seems to regard the work and offices of the Saviour. He seems to forget that the Saviour was God, administering the moral discipline of mankind, as he had been all the while doing for at least four or five thousand years; and so he seems to fancy the Saviour acting as a sort of moderator in some neighborhood quarrel, and saying to these, "*They are called*," and to those, "*They are rejected*." Of the figure of the two olive-trees he finds that "there is an obscurity as to their connection with the course of the reasoning." He considers it so difficult to understand, that it requires very much of the most sapient untangling at the hands of the most astute doctors.

And just so will there be "obscurity" and mystification with any one who will have a telescope to examine an object which lies in plain view, a foot from him.

And yet, such views as these, from the more recent writers, may not, after all, excite so much wonder, seeing they submit themselves to the teachings of such strange and extravagant teachers as Macknight, and others that might be named, an age or two ago.

And now, *that* remark may be considered extravagant, and even presumptuous withal. Well, we can soon try it.

Let us read from Macknight on Rom. xi. 11, and let us read slowly and carefully: "The rejection of the Jews, the destruction of their Church, the abrogation of their law, and the driving of them out of Canaan—all comprehended in the expression, *their fall*, were absolutely necessary to the Gentiles obtaining the knowledge and means of salvation. For first, the worship of God in the Jewish Church, being confined to Jerusalem, it was impossible for the whole Gentile world to find the knowledge and

means of salvation in the Jewish Church; and yet, while that Church subsisted, no other Church could be introduced."

Now, I ask the reader to pause long enough to settle these several thoughts well in his mind.

Here it is positively stated, as an historic fact, as though it were a well-settled matter, that "*the worship of God in the Jewish Church was confined to Jerusalem*"; and secondly, it is strangely and unnaturally concluded, that, to correct that error, *the rejection of the Jews, the destruction of their Church, the abrogation of their laws, and the driving of them out of Canaan, were absolutely necessary.*

We will first look into the mere historic question about *the worship of God in the Jewish Church being confined to the city of Jerusalem.*

I confess my amazement. I stand appalled on reading such a statement from Dr. James Macknight. If he had stated that such worship was confined to the bottom of the Dead Sea, it would have been more ridiculous, but no more untrue than it is; and it is so notoriously untrue that everybody must know it. It would be just as proper now to say that the worship of God in the United States is confined to Washington City. I have alluded to this matter before, and may encounter it again; and it had as well be settled here, with Macknight.

I state that it is not only true, but notorious to all men of some moderate reading, that at the time spoken of, "the worship of God in the Jewish Church" was free, popular, unrestricted, and unconfined to any locality; but was actually dotted all over the country, in perhaps almost every neighborhood, wherever the convenience of a few Church-members demanded. This was not only the case throughout Palestine, but almost all over the known world; that is, wherever there were any Jews.

And am I required to prove a thing so notorious? It seems so. The proof lies in fifty places all around me. Let the uninformed reader open any biblical dictionary, or any other book treating of the Church in those ages, and it is almost the first thing he will see. I doubt not it could be readily proved by *Macknight on the Epistles*, if one were to spend a few minutes in looking it up.

In *Horne's Introduction*, Vol. II., p. 103, it is fully explained that the Jews had synagogues—as their churches were called—everywhere, and worshiped in them every Sabbath, as we do now. “In the time of the Maccabees, synagogues became so frequent that they were to be found in almost every place in Judea; but the Jews were not permitted to build one in a town, unless there were ten persons of leisure in it,” etc., etc. That latter regulation seems to have been a rule of one of the Maccabees, two hundred years or so before Christ; and it is about the only *confinement* I remember in the premises. Watson and everybody else explain that the Jews always, at least since the captivity, worshiped everywhere in synagogues on the Sabbath-day.

And in the New Testament we read of synagogues, and the regular Sabbath-day worship everywhere; and so I say I do not know what Dr. Macknight means. He certainly cannot mean that “the worship of God in the Jewish Church was confined to Jerusalem”—that is out of the question.

And moreover, two of the three denominational Churches into which the Jewish Church was divided, viz., the Samaritan and Hellenistic, most probably never worshiped at Jerusalem at all: their places of offering sacrifice, of stated festive worship, etc., were respectively at Mount Gerizim and Heliopolis.

And then, suppose there had been some disadvantageous

error as to some rules of worship in the Church at that time—was it “absolutely necessary,” in order to correct it, that the Church be “destroyed” utterly? That is strange reasoning. If such a restriction had existed, would it not have been *removed* by *removing* it? There are errors in the Church now, and ever have been; and they—some of them—sometimes get corrected without *destroying* the Church utterly and abrogating its laws.

It is logically absurd, and practically ridiculous, to suppose that the existence of errors in the Church at the time of Christ, or at any other time, rendered the destruction of the Church “absolutely necessary,” or even contingently necessary, in order to “the Gentiles obtaining the knowledge and means of salvation.” The Gentiles, from the days Gentiles were first heard of, to this present day, never did find any difficulty in either getting into the Church, or in being religious after they got there.

Into such extravagances as these are men led by the illogical and unscriptural notion of a Divine “rejection of the Jews,” and the “calling of the Gentiles,” as “collective bodies;” of the “destruction” of a true and scriptural Church, the erection of a new one, and of an *old* religion and a *new* one.

With such errors, neither talent nor learning can save a man from very dangerous pitfalls and very awkward exhibitions.

The wild olive grew then as it grows now, outside the Church, where no tree ever ought to grow. If God “rejected the Jews,” then indeed we have a strange spectacle presented; indeed, we have an impossibility presented. The policy of the Saviour is to *SAVE ALL MEN*; and here we are told he *rejected* six or seven millions of people—an entire nation. That contradicts the Scriptures at the most vital point.

Popery may curse, anathematize, and *reject* men by nations, but we are glad to know the Saviour never does it. "I say, then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid!" That is not the way of it. "Because of unbelief they were broken off."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PUTTING OF NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES, ETC.

IN Matt. ix. 17, and repeated in Mark and Luke, the Saviour is inquired of complainingly, why his disciples did not fast oft, as those of John and the Pharisees did. And he replies that it is not fitting that persons should fast at a marriage or festival while the bridegroom is present with them, etc. And he then goes on farther to illustrate that there is fitness and appropriateness in every thing—in the ordinary affairs of life as well as in religion. And he alludes to the joining of new and old things not suited to each other as the joining of new and old cloth in repairing a garment; or of putting new wine into old bottles—bottles, or cases of skin.

And this impracticability of joining new and old things—things unsuited—is understood by some to mean the impropriety and unsuitableness of attempting to unite the old and new dispensations; that is, that the Jews of the old covenant should not be geared into the machinery of the new.

I do not see how this interpretation can be true, because it would deny some very prominent facts of sacred history. The history is plain, that many of the Jews were so incorporated into what is called the new dispensation. What is called the new Church, or Christian Church, consisted

wholly and exclusively of Jews, for a period of at least about eight or ten years. In this time not another man, woman, or child, except Jews, was in it. And during this period—before the preaching to Cornelius—the Church in connection with the apostles must have numbered many thousands, if not millions. And also, that after this, very many Jews gave in their adhesion to Christ and associated in Church-fellowship with the apostles, is very well known.

I think it quite probable there is an allusion here to the non-fellowship, not of his disciples and Pharisees, or any other denomination of Jews then existing, but of his followers, and any others who denied or might deny him. Of course they cannot be united. Christians and infidels cannot now be united, though there are no living persons who may or might not unite with Christians.

Dr. Clarke says: “The institutes of Christ and those of the Pharisees could never be brought to accord; an attempt to combine the two systems would be as absurd as it would be destructive. The Old Covenant made way for the *New*, which was its completion and end; but with that Old Covenant the New cannot be incorporated.”

The Doctor elsewhere tells us that he uses the terms *Old Covenant* and *Old Testament* as synonymous; and so far as I know, they are always used to denote the same thing, viz., the written revelation before the coming of Christ.

It will be noticed that in the extract above the Doctor speaks of the “institutes of the Pharisees” in contrast with the institutes of Christ, and shows, what is very obvious, that they “could never be brought to accord.” And then, keeping up the same contrast and opposition of the same things, the “two systems,” he calls them “the New Covenant” and the “Old;” that is to say, the Old Covenant is the institutes of the Pharisees, and the New is the institutes of Christ.

This is most remarkable, indeed. The Old Covenant, or

Old Testament—they mean the same thing—is the same as the institutes of the Pharisees: they are synonymous, and are spoken of interchangeably! To this point I ask particular attention. It is this blunder which occasions the Doctor's frequent opposition to the Old Testament, inconsistent as it may be with his teachings elsewhere, and which opposition—or we might as well call it repudiation, as we shall see in the farther prosecution of this subject—is interlarded all through his New Testament Commentaries.

Who are the Pharisees, and what are their institutes? The Pharisees were a little literary or philosophical school, which figured considerably about Jerusalem, numbering a few thousand, and were probably not known farther back than one or two hundred years at most. It is not very improbable that there were men then living who could remember their origin, or when they came to be generally known. Josephus speaks of them as a very large sect; so much so, that at one time they numbered "about six thousand." Their religious tenets were somewhat good and somewhat bad. They were objectionable precisely where, and exactly to the extent that, they varied from the Old Covenant, or Old Testament, as we have it now. Those variations from the Scriptures were considerable and important; and I repeat, as everybody knows, that they formed entirely and exactly the objections that any Christians ever had against their tenets, their institutes, religious views, or practices.

How, then, can Dr. Clarke class "the institutes of the Pharisees" and the Old Covenant as one and the same thing? Did any Christian ever allege or hold any thing against the Old Testament? And was any thing ever alleged against the Pharisees except their departures from the Old Testament? It is very true that the institutes of the Pharisees and those of Christ could not be brought to accord, as the Doctor says. They were "two systems"—widely different

systems. But it is very far from being true that there ever was or is now any thing in the Old Testament which is not in perfect harmony with the New. Or if the Doctor still insists that there is, then I insist he ought to point it out specifically, that Christians may repudiate it.

I hold, therefore, that this is a very great, and, in biblical criticism, a very damning oversight, and one that must be corrected. The institutes of the Pharisees were nothing, or next to nothing. They had foisted upon the Scriptures several clumsy and foolish errors, and *Dr. Clarke charges them upon the Old Testament!*

No, sir! I object to it. The Old Testament—or Old Covenant, whichever word any one may prefer—was as good then as now—no better, no worse. And these objectionable things in the tenets of the Pharisees were then just what they would be now. And the relation between revelation and religious error was the very same then as it is now.

And when the Doctor tells us that “*with the Old Covenant the New cannot be incorporated,*” he tells that which must sound very strangely in the ear of a Christian, when looked at directly and carefully. And it looks particularly strange in an elaborate work which *does incorporate* each with the other, the common mass forming the BIBLE OF CHRISTIANITY.

And he also brings himself into palpable conflict with both the Saviour and the apostles, or at least some of them. In strict literary exactness it perhaps cannot be said that the Saviour incorporated the Old Testament with the New, because, as a piece of literary composition, the New Testament was not in existence in the days of the Saviour. But that he *incorporated* the Old Testament into all his teachings, is too notorious to need more than a suggestion. Indeed, he taught nothing in or about religion that he did not draw directly from the Old Testament. And most preëminently

may the same thing be said of all the apostles, so far as we have any information.

I hold, therefore, that this teaching of Dr. Clarke is alarming. I would not, perhaps, have said so much about it, if it had been found here in this one place only; but the general idea is interlarded almost throughout, and mars the beauty and very much of the strength of his entire Commentary on the New Testament, for it crops out in more than a hundred places.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CONVERSION OF JEWS—WHAT IS MEANT BY IT?

CONVERSION, as the term is technically and popularly used in religious language, is well understood. It applies to persons who have grown old enough to commit sin; and then they need to be converted, by the grace of God, from their sins to a life of holiness. And so no man can be saved without being converted. Whatever other questions might arise among Christians about conversion, I believe this much is acknowledged by all.

Now, at the time of the birth of Christ and before, all Jews held, nominally, the true religion; though, like nominal Christians now-a-days, it is to be presumed that but a small minority of them were truly pious. But at that time conversion certainly could not be applied to Jews as such. A Jew might or might not be pious. It is very certain that some of them were eminently pious.

They needed conversion then, not because they were Jews, but because they were sinners—such of them as were unconverted sinners. But if we speak of the apostatizing Jews, who at a later period renounced their fundamental religious faith by denying the Christ they formerly professed, then we speak of a very different people. But their case is not now under consideration.

The conversion of Jewish persons is mentioned in several

places in the New Testament—Matt. xiii. 15, xviii. 3, Mark iv. 12, Luke xxii. 32, John xii. 40, Acts xxviii. 27, iii. 19, James v. 19, etc. In these and all other similar cases, the doctrine is not conversion from one religious system to another; it is a conversion to the true religion—not *from* Judaism, but *to* Judaism. That is, a Jew who misunderstood his own religion, or from any cause did not conform to it—a thing as possible then as now—needed conversion to a knowledge and experience of his own faith. A Jew of those days did not need to change his religion, but to conform to it.

But in some of the modern misteachings of theology, we are instructed in a different kind of conversion. It is supposed that a Jew needed conversion because he was a Jew.

Saul of Tarsus was a wicked, unconverted man, though a zealous, hot-headed Churchman. He needed conversion as much three or five years before the death of Christ, as he did three years afterward; though by the latter period he had waxed strongly in semi-infidelity. At this latter period he was converted—converted to the same religion he ought to have been converted to ten years before.

The doctrine of what, in theological language, is called *conversion*, is very plainly set forth in Acts xxvi. 18. In this sense, of course all Jews need conversion, not because they are Jews, but because they are sinners. Jews, as such, needed no conversion. If they had a pious faith in Christ, either prospective or retrospective, they had the Christian religion. Beyond this no man can go, except to “grow” in it.

Dr. Nevin, in his *Biblical Antiquities*, p. 254, speaks of Christians “who had been Jews.” And did they cease to be Jews? What a glaring error! And yet how currently it is received! St. Paul did not cease to be a Jew—so he tells us.

Dr. George Smith, in his *Elements of Divinity*, p. 31, says the books of the *New Testament* prove that the “writers of them were what they professed to be—Jews converted to Christianity.” Verily they were; and so were the writers of the books of the *Old Testament*. They were all written by Jews, and they were all converted men. But nobody was “converted” in the sense in which the learned author speaks. That is a solecism and a contradiction. Whether the writers of the *New Testament* were converted before or after their personal acquaintance with Christ, or before or after their knowledge of him *personally*, is a question the author now before us cannot answer.

Macknight speaks (Epis., p. 721,) of Ananias “before his conversion to Christianity” as being held in high repute among the Jews. Acts xxii. 12. This kind of teaching misleads the student in Christianity on a very important point in theology. I am well aware that this learned and very valuable theologian is by no means alone in this error, but his error is none the less, but indeed the greater, for all this.

There is and can be no such conversion as is here alluded to. Let us read: “And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight,” etc.

This was at Damascus. It is commonly said that Paul was converted *on his way* to Damascus. It was rather *at* Damascus, just before entering the city. Ananias is presumed to have been a citizen of Damascus, which was a large city away beyond the borders of Palestine, some hundred miles from Jerusalem, the capital of Syria. Ananias was then a pious, Christian man. When he was *converted*—*i. e.*, became religious—we have no information. I grant it might have been one year before this, or it might,

with equal propriety in guessing, have been twenty or fifty years before. He salutes Paul very familiarly, and in good Christian style; and by his preternatural or providential selection for the part we see him act, we are warranted in presuming that he was a man of years and of substantial and exemplary piety.

But Dr. Macknight supposes and teaches that he was a pious man according to Old Testament piety—the *law*—and was afterward “converted to *Christianity*.” No such conversion as this is known to theology. Ananias, like all other men, needed to be converted to practical religion, and like all other men—unless he backslid—he needed no other conversion. “A devout man”—meaning a pious man—cannot be converted, for that expression informs us he was already converted. But Macknight strangely supposes that Ananias was a devout man before he was converted, or became pious.

The term “devout,” in Acts x. 2, must be understood to conform to this rule, or otherwise we make St. Luke teach that which is palpably erroneous. But in this case, Luke is evidently not intending to say that Cornelius was a converted man; for if so, then he was a Christian, and then the whole notice of him falls to the ground. The first few verses of the tenth of Acts evidently represent the estimate in which Cornelius was generally held.

Whatever may have been the state of theological knowledge, either general or particular, in any ages of the world, it cannot for a moment be held that before Christ persons were converted, half-way, to a low state of piety, and that full conversion is confined exclusively to the period subsequent.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ESSENTIAL CHRISTOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE Old Testament contains *a complete system of religion* of some sort. It is Christianity, or it is some religious system different from it. Is there any religion in it that is not Christian? And is there any thing essentially Christian that is not in it?

Dr. John Dick teaches a good deal about two different *dispensations*—the old one which expired, and the new and better one which took its place; that one of the two great laws of religion of the former was “abrogated” when the “Christian religion” succeeded “the religion of the Jews.”

In his *Theology*—generally an able and excellent work—p. 77, he tells us that, “The apostles were sent forth to erect a Church distinct from that of the Jews, observing new ordinances, and governed by new laws.”

And on page 71 he opens his fourteenth lecture as follows: “About one hundred years ago a book was published in England, by the celebrated Dr. Tindal, bearing the title, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, the object of which was to show that the gospel is a republication of the law of nature, and that there neither is nor can be any revelation distinct from what he calls the internal revelation of that law in the hearts of all mankind. In opposition to this bold and impious assertion, we maintain with President

Forbes, in his *Thoughts Concerning Religion, Natural and Revealed*, that Christianity is very near as old as the creation. We deny that it was the primary religion of mankind, but we are ready to prove that only a very short time elapsed before it became their religion; or, in other words, that subsequently the same system of religion which we at present profess, was made known to our first parents, and has been received and acted upon by the people of God in every subsequent age.

“We are accustomed to give the designation of Christianity to the religion which was published to the world about eighteen hundred years ago, by our blessed Saviour and his apostles, and thus to distinguish it from preceding revelations; but our design is not to signify that it was a new religion. The Church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, holds the truths taught by both, and acknowledges as her Head the same Divine Redeemer, who is the subject of their entire testimony.”

In this latter quotation, which I take to be a flat contradiction of the quotation on page 77, the author evidently does himself injustice by using the word *published*. This is generally used to mean the *first* promulgation of something. To *publish*, in the ordinary sense, is to make known that which before was private or unknown. Our Saviour, according to the above statement—which is undoubtedly true, with this single exception—*published* religion only in the sense that he taught and explained it. But he did not teach any *new* religious principle or doctrine—any thing before unpublished. In that sense—which is not a very good use of the word *publish*, in that place—all ministers, before and since his day, may be said to publish Christianity.

Christianity began, not *at the time* of the creation, but, as Dr. Dick says, shortly after. *The same system of religion which we now profess, was made known to our first parents,*

and has been received and acted upon by the people of God ever since.

In the order of Providence, our Saviour did not make his personal appearance at first, but along at a certain time in the history of the Church; thus throwing part of the Church before, and part after, that event. This rendered it naturally necessary, as previously explained, that the same acts of worship, or acts of the same meaning—in order to be the same in meaning—should be different in the *external mode* of performance, and in that alone, in the two periods. No other changes than such as these were called for or necessary at the Christian era. Religion and Church continued precisely the same.

The Old Testament contains, full and complete, the system of religion we call Christianity; but like any other system of truth comprising belief and practice, it was, and with the New added, still is, susceptible of farther elaboration—of being more fully taught. The New Testament elaborates the Old, without change.

That the New Testament writers regarded the Old Testament as comprising a complete system of Christianity, is a proposition very easily proved. Indeed, they did not pretend to teach any doctrine, tenet, or truth, which they were not ready to prove by the then existing Scriptures. If they preached a gospel, they drew it from the Old Testament, and proved every part of it thereby. They not only preached no other gospel than that contained in the Old Testament, but they repudiated every thing else, declaring every addition to it to be false.

I will quote a few passages: “Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner”? etc., Matt. xxi. 42. Here the appeal is made to Ps. cxviii. 22, and Isa. liii. 7.

“I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye

took me not; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled." Mark xiv. 49, Ps. xxii. 6.

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." Luke xxiv. 27. Dr. Clarke says, What a sermon this must have been!

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures," etc.—Luke xxiv. 45; and, "Thus it is written, (in the Scriptures,) and thus it behooved Christ to suffer," etc.

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." John v. 39. This is read in the indicative, rather than the imperative mood. In either case, however, they were pointed to that which was written in the Old Testament for their religion.

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath-days reasoned out of the Scriptures." Acts xvii. 2.

"These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts xvii. 11.

"For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." Acts xviii. 28.

1 Cor. xv. 3, shows that the death of Christ, in all those things which a Christian is required to believe, was *according to the Scriptures*; also, Acts x. 43, xviii. 38.

In Luke xvi. 29–31, it is stated, in the most powerful forms of language, that a man who is not saved in exact pursuance of the Old Testament, cannot by possibility be saved at all.

Prov. vi. 23, and 2 Peter i. 19, show that the Old Testament is an unerring guide to all men.

The Old Testament is fully sufficient to make one "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. iii. 15.

"If any man speak, (preach,) let him do it as the oracles of God," (the Old Testament.) 1 Peter iv. 11.

Holiness in Christians is obedience to the Old Testament teachings. 1 Peter i. 16. They contain all the promises of the gospel, Rom. i. 2; they reveal the laws, statutes, and judgments of God, Deut. iv. 5-14, Ex. xxiv. 3, 4; they testify of Christ, John v. 39, Acts x. 43, 1 Cor. xv. 3; they are full and sufficient for all religious ends and purposes, Luke xvi. 29-31; they are profitable for both doctrine and practice; they were written for our instruction, Rom. xv. 4; they are not to be added to, nor is aught to be taken from them, Deut. iv. 2, xiii. 32; they work effectually in all who believe, 1 Thess. ii. 13; Christ enables us to understand them, Luke xxiv. 45; the Holy Ghost enables us to understand them, John xvi. 13, 1 Cor. ii. 10-14; every thing must be tried by them, Isa. viii. 20, Acts xvii. 11; they are designed for the regeneration of mankind, James i. 18, 1 Peter i. 23; for converting the soul and for making wise the simple, Ps. xix. 7; for sanctifying the soul, John xvii. 17, Eph. v. 26; for producing Christian hope, Ps. cxix. 49, Rom. xv. 4; obedience, Deut. xvii. 19, 20; for cleansing the heart, John xv. 3, Eph. v. 26; for promoting growth in grace, 1 Peter ii. 2; they are the standard of teaching, 1 Peter iv. 11; and are to be appealed to in all cases, 1 Cor. i. 31, 1 Peter i. 16.

Thus I have examined about two hundred passages—and I know not how many more there are—which prove that there is no doctrine nor teaching known to revealed religion which is not to be drawn directly from the Old Testament. St. Paul expressly declares that he preaches nothing else, and he instructs Timothy to follow the same rule. It is well known

that the preaching or adhering to doctrines not found in the Jewish Scriptures constituted the sum of the loud complaints against St. Paul; and hence his efforts, all through his writings, to support himself by what *is written*.

“For the hope of Israel,” the apostle exclaims, “I am bound with this chain.” His confinement was—if he is to be credited—for the ancient faith of the Church, and not for any “*new*” views, tenets, or practices. And again: “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.” And the Epistle to the Hebrews entire, is one solid argument refuting the charges against its author and his associates, that they had imbibed new religious tenets. From beginning to end it contends for the specific and identical oneness of the Christianity of the apostles with the Judaism of their fathers and the ancient Church.

At the time of Christ, and for many years previously, the Church possessed its BIBLE—its body of Scripture-books. These were held in the highest veneration. No people ever lived who held their sacred books in greater sacredness than did the Jews, at and before the coming of Christ. But there being no printing, the books all being written with the pen, they were few in number, and only in the hands of the learned. Very few of the people could read; indeed, *reading* and *writing* was a profession aspired to by only a very few. A knowledge of what the Scriptures contained was had by the people only through the Church-readings on the Sabbath. So the liability to misconstrue the Scriptures was much greater then than now.

The great complaints against the apostles were that they preached things *new*—things not taught in Scripture, and,

therefore, false. To have done this, would have been as great an offense against religion then as now; and if the apostles or anybody else had taught and preached things not taught in the Scriptures, the complaints against them would have been just. But they constantly denied the charges, and contended that they were made only by those who did not understand the Scriptures; that they taught exactly what the Old Testament taught, and nothing—nothing beyond. And when we come to examine what they did teach, and compare their teachings with the Old Testament, we find that they did not travel one inch beyond them. They explained and elaborated, but they dared not—nor did they—add to them one new idea. There is not to-day a truth, nor doctrine, nor idea pertaining to Christianity, in any authentic form, which is not contained, in some form, in the Old Testament.

And yet, how often, and in how many forms of language, do we see it stated that the *Christian religion*—meaning, and sometimes explaining, it to be a “new religion”—was set up and taught for the first time by our Saviour, and the apostles and evangelists! And how often do we see “the Christian religion” and “the Jewish religion,” in these express terms, held up in *contrast*, and “contrasted” with each other! These teachings, I venture strongly to suggest, ought to abate, because there is no Christian religion which contrasts with, or is even different from, the religion of the Old Testament.

The Christology of the Old Testament is as complete, though not as elaborate, as is that of the New.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHAT IS GOSPEL ?

A LITTLE careful attention to the very simple and natural manner in which words generally acquire their meaning, will assist us in the inquiry.

The linguists tell us that *gospel* is very nearly, if not quite synonymous, with *good news*, or *valuable intelligence*, a *good* or *joyful message*. The word, however, as we write it, is of recent origin. It was formerly written *god-spel*, which meant *good spell*, or good history, or good things related, or good speech. Originally, it did not include nor suggest any religious or sacred ideas or associations.

When Christ made his personal appearance in the world, those who regarded him as truly the long looked-for Messiah, though they knew he did not *then become* their Saviour, nevertheless looked upon his coming as a great and joyous occasion to the Church; and so his coming was *gospel*, or as these and those heard of the fact, it was *gospel* to them. That is to say, the word came to be so used. The meaning of a word is the *meaning* of the person who uses it.

The word, like most other descriptive nouns, is now used to mean several different and distinct things; and like thousands of similar words, we cannot know what is meant by it, until we see the association in which it is placed.

First, and most generally, it is used to mean the doctrine of *God's grace*—that he will pardon sinners through the intervention of Christ. This is the sense in which it is used in Matt. xi. 5, Mark xvi. 15, and many other places. In this sense it has no particular reference to the Christian era, to the personal coming of Christ, nor to any thing immediately connected with his human history. This offer of pardon by God's grace was made not in the days of the apostles, but in the days of Adam. It does not exclusively pertain to the post-Messianic period, but to the world of mankind generally; and so in this, by far the most common use made of the word, the *good news* was by no means first heard in the days of Christ's humanity, but thousands of years previously.

Secondly. The word is used sometimes to mean either one, or in the plural, all of the four evangelical histories of our Lord's personal life—those written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. This is an accommodated, not a primary use of the word. The primary idea which was probably attached to the word or words from which ours is derived, viz., the good news that *Christ has come*, has long since been lost sight of, if indeed it was ever so used to any considerable extent. The word is not now so used in English speech.

By *the gospel* is usually meant the divinely-revealed religion which is taught in the Bible. A minister is understood to preach *the gospel* as much when his subject is found in the Old Testament as in the New. Gospel, in this most common and ordinary use of the word, pertains as much to one part of Scripture as another—no more to Luke or John than to Genesis, Job, Isaiah, or Revelation. The same dispensation, the same teaching of faith in Christ, the same rules of religion and conditions of salvation, are found in common in all the books of the Old and New Testaments.

But it is apparent there must be a very great difference, in some respects, in the ante and post-Messianic periods of the Church. In the former, no man had *seen* the Saviour; not because he did not exist, surely, but because he had not yet made himself visible to mortal eyes. And it must have been a matter of great anxiety and intense solicitude with the pious, that the Christ, their Saviour, would, according to his promise, make himself visible to their senses. The realization of this anxiety could not fail to be most glorious gospel—welcome, cheering intelligence to the pious who lived in that age. But all this had nothing to do with doctrines of religion.

The *gospel*, therefore, does not indicate any change, improvement, or new method of dispensing grace, or in offering salvation to the world. Christ's teaching was divine revelation, but is not to be understood thereby that the gospel was then first revealed; for Moses and the prophets revealed the whole of it in substance, though much additional light is thrown upon the picture by him. He greatly illuminated, enforced, explained, the gospel already revealed. The very personal coming of Christ rendered this additional light practicable. God's free, pardoning grace was as freely offered before as after Christ's coming; but now man is placed in a better and more favorable condition to receive it. The coming of Christ did not, therefore, work any legal change in the *status* of God or man, nor change their relation; yet, by the influx of more light, and the ability to see that which before could only be anticipated, man with one eye now could discern what would have required two previously.

The gospel is not, therefore, a system of religion contradistinguishable from a system previously in vogue; neither does it change, add to, nor take from that system, but is the same so far as concerns all religious doctrines.

The minister before Christ's coming preached *the gospel* precisely as the minister now does, supposing them both to understand the Scriptures. The one, in directing his hearers to a sensible or palpable knowledge of Christ, pointed them forward, while the other points them backward.

It is *Christ*, and not his *coming*, which forms the great central idea of religion. The terms *before Christ*, and *after Christ*, are not to be understood literally. The meaning is, before, and after Christ did a certain thing. Christ has existed as our Saviour, fulfilling all the functions thereof, at least since the time of the paradisaical expulsion, if not from all eternity; and since the expulsion, or about that time, he has certainly not changed his relation nor his attitude to mankind.

Dr. John Dick—Theo., p. 449—in defining *gospel*, says, "First, it signifies the history of Christ." This is certainly not its primary, but its secondary and merely accommodated use. But he is in a far greater error when he says, "Secondly. The gospel signifies the Christian revelation, or system of doctrines, ordinances, and laws which Jesus Christ has delivered to us, and which is justly called good news."

By the words, "which Jesus Christ has delivered to us," he is understood to mean, things delivered for the first time eighteen hundred years ago, in the time of the Saviour's fleshly appearance.

The mistake of the learned author is, therefore, no less than this: that Jesus Christ did not so deliver to us any new revelation, nor system of doctrines, ordinances, or laws of religion, which were not substantially already delivered in the Old Testament Scriptures by the same divine authority.

I ask the Doctor, what "system of doctrines, ordinances,

and laws" did Christ deliver to us anew, and for the first time? I know it is a very fashionable way of writing and speaking. But I ask to be informed of one *doctrine*, of one *ordinance*, of one *law* of religion, which Christ delivered to us anew, and for the first time. He tells us that Christ delivered to us our entire *system* of new—he evidently means new—"doctrines, ordinances, and laws." And I contend that he not only did not deliver to us a new code, but that he did not deliver to us one new statute, one new doctrine, ordinance, or law pertaining either to religion, to ethics, or to ecclesiastical manners, save some outward forms, where the old forms could not rationally continue. And I am unwilling to receive for an answer that, "of course, he delivered the Christian religion to us." He delivered the Christian religion to us in the Old Testament, through Moses and the prophets, but I deny that he delivered to us any part of it, for the first time, in the New, and I ask for specification.

The Doctor himself says—p. 48—that "our Saviour appealed to them (the Old Testament books) as containing the words of eternal life, and bearing testimony to him; and gave his sanction to them all." Very well, then: will any one claim that a subsequent revelation contains something more than testimony to Christ, and the words of eternal life? Is the *gospel* something else, or something more, than *the words of eternal life through Christ*?

Again, page 449, the Doctor tells us, "The gospel signifies the revelation of the grace and mercy of God to sinners, or the joyful tidings of salvation through Christ." That is exactly right, and is exactly, almost *verbatim*, what he says the Old Testament contains.

In Heb. iv. 2, and Gal. iii. 8, and some other places, the gospel is spoken of with special reference to the Old Testament. For the most part, it is spoken of with general refer-

ence to the Old Testament, or to the Old and New indiscriminately. In Luke ii. 10, 11, it is spoken of with special reference to the *coming* of Christ. In Isa. xl. 8, xli. 27, lii. 7, Luke ii. 10, 11, it is connected with the Old Testament.

In Mark i. 14, 15, and elsewhere, the Saviour himself is represented as preaching *the gospel of the kingdom of God*. Now *what* was it that the Saviour thus preached? He did not preach his *coming*. That we are elsewhere told he did not *preach*; that is, he did not openly and publicly avow it. He intimated it privately, and left it to be inferred. Neither did he preach the *history* as written by the evangelists, for this was not then written, neither had the things therein stated transpired. We are then shut up to the conclusion that he preached the religion which God has revealed to mankind. He preached the conditions of salvation; he preached the then existing Bible; and he preached these things as never man spake before nor since. The way we know that he did not then, or at any other time, preach any thing *different* from any and all the doctrines of religion in the Old Testament is, that we see him repeatedly refer to and recognize those Scriptures.

* Henderson's *Buck's Dictionary* defines *gospel* exactly right: "The revelation of the grace of God to fallen man through a Mediator." That gospel was first made known to Adam, and more fully through succeeding patriarchs and prophets, and then far, far more fully than it could have been made known before, when God himself clothed the Divinity in man's form, and walked on the earth, and talked with men in order, more fully than it could be otherwise done, to demonstrate his grace, and make salvation palpable.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE NEW TESTAMENT ELABORATES THE OLD.

THE doctrines or conditions of religion are all contained in very small portions of the Scriptures. They are intermingled all through them, and are repeated many times, in many different places, and in a great variety of form and mode of expression. They are not only stated didactically, but are illustrated, amplified, and restated, until the powers of language seem almost exhausted in their explanation and enforcement. These amplifying and illustrative teachings are found much more plentiful in the New Testament than the Old; the latter being—much of it—taken up with such historic, biographic, incidental, and prophetic teaching as seems necessary to form a rational system. Frequently you may find a doctrine stated and explained a hundred times, perhaps, in the New Testament, when the same thing may not be set forth with much plainness more than four or five times in the Old.

A very large proportion of the volume of the New Testament is of this character. Its mere didactic teaching is small. It is an inspired expansion, explanation, illustration, elaboration, and enforcement of the didactic precepts found in the Old, and repeated in the New.

And also, large portions of the Old Testament bear this same relation to other portions; and just so, likewise, do portions of the New elaborate other portions.

Besides these elaborations of doctrines and precepts already taught in the Old Testament, there is nothing in the New, except such things—relating, not to Christ, as the Saviour, nor to the conditions of salvation, but to his personal advent—as could not, in the nature of things, be in the Old. The things in the New Testament and not in the Old, are of an entirely different nature from what is oftentimes supposed.

There is a large class of theological teaching oftentimes met with in the pulpit and elsewhere, which attributes to the Saviour the teaching of many of the most valuable doctrines of religion, leaving the impression that he then taught them for the first time; whereas, his teaching only elaborated and confirmed that which had been all along known and taught.

Doctor Timothy Dwight runs into this error in explaining Christ's doctrines. Theology, Vol. II., p. 93, in enumerating "*The things which he taught,*" says that—

"*First.* He taught mankind that the heart is the seat of all virtue and vice, or, in Scripture language, of holiness and sin." And

"*Secondly.* Christ taught mankind that virtue consists solely in loving God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves." And p. 95—

"*Thirdly.* Christ taught that the meek and lowly virtues, as they are called, or, in other words, exercises of virtue, are superior in their excellency to any others.

"*Fourthly.* Christ, in the same complete manner, taught the way in which fallen beings may again become virtuous and happy."

It is very certain that Christ taught all these things; but it is as certain that they were all previously taught in the Scriptures. He taught what was already taught in the revealed word of God, but nothing more; he taught none

of these things as new things, but explained all the while, as he went along, that they were old things previously taught, and that he was only elaborating and enforcing the doctrines.

But the Doctor, keeping up the idea of original action on the part of Christ, runs into what I consider a very great error, when he says,

“*Fifthly*. Christ established his Church in a new form, appointed in it new ministers, constituted a new discipline, and directed anew the peculiar duties of both its officers and members.”

I am here compelled to join issue directly with the Doctor, and deny utterly the truth of each and all of these historic facts. *He did none of these things*. In this I am aware I meet a very popular error, in which Dr. Dwight is but a common participant; but I appeal to the Scriptures, and aver that there is not, either in the Old that he would, nor in the New that he did, give any sort of *new form* to the Church; that he did appoint in it *new*—that is, a *new kind* of ministers; or that he would or did give it a new discipline, or direct anew the peculiar duties of either its officers or members. I deny that he changed *at all*, either the religion or the worship of the Church, as they were both already, long previously, established by divine recognition and custom. Such *errors* as he saw among the people, or anticipated, in *departing from* the religion and discipline of the Church, as written in the Scriptures, he corrected; but in every thing he did, he enforced, confirmed, established, and honored, *every thing* written which made up the Jewish Church and its religion.

I hold up the Scriptures, and show that in all the controversies of those times, there was no dispute or difference about the Church, its *form*, its *ministers*, or its *discipline*. I do not see in them the least intimation that, in these things,

the Saviour or the apostles saw any thing that needed modification or change. The controversies of those times related to other matters entirely. First. They related to one single question in religion—a question which necessarily arose at this particular time, viz., whether Jesus was or was not the Christ; and secondly—as all ministers have always done, or ought always to do—he corrected the morals of the Church, without introducing any new rules of morals. And, recognizing himself as Christ, he of course taught the discontinuance of such external ceremonies as pointed forward to Christ's appearance. These are not only the only alterations he "appointed," but they are the only notable or important changes that occurred about this time. As THE CHURCH did not need any changes, in the view of the Saviour, none were made. Most assuredly this is true, if there be any truth or naturalness in scriptural revelation. A new Church was not only a superfluity—it was, as already explained, an impossibility.

There were no two Churches among Jews and Christians of those times, with this exception and in this sense: The rejecting Jews of course apostatized from the true religion—to reject Christ is to apostatize from true religion—and this, of course, naturally caused *them to leave the Church*. Their abandonment of their religion necessitated a discontinuance of their religious *association* with their former fellows; and so theirs became a new Church—it might be called a Church—with a totally false religion, like the Mormon Church. They did not adopt any new rules. Generally, outward things continued about the same with both the true and the false Jews. A change in religion is not likely to occasion, much less does it necessitate, any considerable changes in outward Church service; and indeed, down to this day, there is not much change in the outward working of these two Churches; not much more, if any, than be-

tween some branches of the Christian Church now. See the Greek, Romish, and various Protestant Churches.

The Saviour complained of the unwilling or refractory Jews, because they refused to *continue in their own Church*, according to its divinely-written religion; but the formation of another Church, in a new form, is a thing wholly imaginary, and is contradicted by all the facts. He appointed ministers *in*, and not *out of*, the Church—the Church of which he himself was a member, in which he was born, and in which he died. Making no radical changes in any thing, but taking the Scriptures for his BIBLE, he gave to the Church such directions, both general and particular, as wholesomeness and good order required.

“*Sixthly*,” the Doctor continues, “Christ taught the great doctrines concerning a future state of being.” Most assuredly he did; but did he teach them as new? Was it the inaugurating of a new doctrine in the Church? Certainly not. He taught this doctrine out of the Scriptures, where it had already been revealed by himself, through Job, David, Daniel, and Isaiah; and he explained and enforced it more fully than it had been done by any one previously. Many ministers have done the same thing, both before and since his day.

Thus it is that the New Testament elaborates the Old. The religion of the Old, in all its parts and doctrines, is extensively, ingeniously, and authoritatively explained, enforced, illustrated, and elaborated over and over, and in many ways, in the New.

The Jews who went with their rulers in rejecting Christ, repudiated the Jewish Scriptures *so far as Christ was concerned*. And how far was this? It was just so far as their *religion* was concerned. It is not enough to say that Christ was *in* the Old Testament: the truth is, there was, and is, in the Old Testament, nothing else but Christ, which goes

to make up its system of religious faith. These rejecting Jews, therefore, repudiated *the religion of their fathers* in entirety. In nominally holding to the Scriptures as they did, and still do, they hold to nothing but a similarity of names, to some history, the history of a people whose religion they repudiate, to some verbiage, unmeaning manipulations, etc.

If there is, as a mere matter of fact, any addition in the New Testament to the religion of the Old, or any diminishing from it, then the one or the other is untrue; for both of these are clearly and expressly forbidden.

“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it; that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” Deut. iv. 2.

“What thing soever I command you, observe and do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it.” Deut. xii. 32.

“Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Prov. xxx. 6.

I am at a loss how to understand the learned Dr. Olshausen when he says—Com., Vol I., p. 135—“The Scriptures are divided into two parts, of which the first relates to God’s covenant with man in the *law*, the second to the covenant of *grace*.”

This, as a general division of the teachings of all the Scriptures, is all well enough; but if he intends to mean that the covenant of the *law* is the Old Testament, and that of *grace* is the New, he is very much mistaken; for both law and grace are abundantly covenanted in both, and exclusively in neither. Texts in proof are abundant: See Ezek. ix. 8, Ps. xlv. 2, lxxxiv. 11, Prov. iii. 34, Zech. xii. 10, Ex. xxii. 27, xxxiv. 6, etc. Will any man say that salvation by *grace* is not offered to all mankind in the Old Testament?

The New Testament elaborates the Old. But in so saying, I do not by any means intend to teach that the New Testament is merely a comment upon the Old, on the principles of logical reason, as uninspired men would elaborate them by the mere force of reason. It was, however, all this; but in addition thereto, it was an exposition *authoritatively announced*, and from which there was no appeal; it was a *divine exposition of divine teachings*. Such an exposition was eminently necessary. The condition of the world, the progress of language, the improvements in the modes of didactic instruction, together with the circumstances attending the coming of Christ, rendered it necessary.

The New Testament is a *divinely-inspired* comment upon, and elucidation of, the writings of the prophets; which writings, however, contain all the doctrines of religion. Those Scriptures are certainly susceptible of indefinite elaboration; but they needed—many of the things taught, needed—an authoritative explication. This is given not only authoritatively by unerring inspiration, but with a master hand; and at the same time that it does this, it places a legible finger-post at every logical and doctrinal point, which may serve as a guide to all future elaboration of the same great truths.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CHRIST'S TRUE POSITION IN REGARD BOTH TO THE OLD
AND NEW TESTAMENTS BRIEFLY STATED.

IN the economy of God, respecting man's salvation, it was the policy that there should not only *be* a Saviour, sustaining the relation to man he now does, but that he should be *seen* by man. Without making a personal, palpable appearance among men, we would always labor under the lack of at least one of the greatest and most important evidences of his being, and of our duty to him. This appearance, then, to be made most useful, must be accommodated to our circumstances and condition. It might have been made at the very first, or it might have been continuous, or it might have been, as it was, for a brief space, and after a lapse of time.

The first would have been attended with many obvious disadvantages. The world was then in an exceedingly dark, twilight condition, with no knowledge of itself, nor of God; no science, no literature, no history, no experience. The appearance would have been lost, for almost all beneficial effects, in the obscurity of a dim and almost embryo condition of things. And for the appearance—the Emmanuel state of Christ—to have been continuous, its effects would have been lost in the uncertainty of a commonplace familiarity. The awe and reverence so neces-

sary to be inspired, would soon be lost and gone, and the whole plan be defeated.

Right here is an important principle in human nature very necessary to be noted: the more we *see* any thing, the less and the less we are impressed by it; and the more we *believe* a truth or thing unseen, the more we thus dwell by faith upon it—the more effect continuously it produces on the mind and heart. Let this important thought be elaborated by the reader.

Then the present plan only would have answered the end; and then it must be after a reasonable lapse of time, and for a brief period; and then it must be at some particular period in contradistinction to all others. And so we read it was in “the fullness of time,” that is, the best time. Many reasons could be stated for this.

Now, the system of religious information and instruction designed for mankind, had been long since revealed to the world. *And yet nothing had been fully revealed.* It required the Emmanuel state of Christ in order for any revelation, past, present, or future, to be sufficiently vivified, established, and confirmed. The Old Testament revelation was *believed* by Old Testament Christians only because they *believed* in the Christ which made up its religious system. The truth of the one was necessarily dependent on the truth of the other; and if the appearance had been put off to this day, we should be now dependent on our faith in the future coming for our belief in the truth of the revelation.

Christ was not, as many writers seem to consider him, a mere theologian, who appeared in his day, as did Isaiah, and Paul, and others, with authority to regulate religious matters then present and future. The Old Testament became a *divine testament*, so far as man's appreciation of it was concerned, only because he, by his coming and

work, made it so. The Old Testament is as much dependent on him as the New. Whatever of life, divinity, or power either possesses, it derives from him. He confirmed the Old Testament, and made it Scripture. It was Scripture all the while indeed, but was still dependent on him for its absolute certitude and authenticity. It was as much dependent on him for its annunciation as was the New.

So that the time of the coming of Christ becomes a period of momentous import to the Church; but it calls for, or introduces, a new Church, or a new religion, or new ethics, or modes of worship, or conditions of grace or salvation, no more than it does a new Saviour or a new Creator. The Saviour came not to destroy one jot or one tittle of the religious system then known and prescribed to the Church; on the contrary, he came to teach, to confirm, to establish, every part of it.

On one occasion, Luke x. 25, the Saviour was asked the direct question, What should one do to inherit eternal life? And what was his reply? It was not that he was about to set up in the world a new system of salvation, by which men might be saved on the basis of *believing* something. No; he referred the inquirer directly to the Old Testament Scriptures for an answer. "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" If you wish to be saved, read the divinely-revealed directions in the Scriptures—there you will find a complete system of salvation.

But at the same time that he referred this man to the Old Testament Scriptures for a complete rule of faith, as he did all others on all occasions, he explained and opened out those teachings, embellishing and enlarging them, giving them new attractions, and placing them in more favorable points of light.

He came not to destroy those teachings, but to TEACH

THEM. He came to announce no new rules of religion, or different conditions of salvation, but to explain and enforce the old ones.

When he overtook Cleopas and his companion, did he say to them, "See here, friends, you do not understand the matter? A new dispensation is about to be opened. This old religion is rapidly vanishing away. It never was any thing but 'the Jewish religion,' and the Jews are to be superseded, and the Gentiles are to 'come in their room.' Christianity is now about to be set up; a 'new system' is to be introduced. Salvation by faith is *hereafter* to be the rule. The law of Moses answered tolerably well for Scripture so long as it was intended to last, but the gospel, a 'new religion,' is to be the rule hereafter." Did the Saviour explain things in that way? Did he intimate such things?

No, no! Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning his religious administration; about his kingdom; regarding the religion of mankind, then and forever. *That* was, in his estimation, the gospel; and if that, the writings of the prophets, be not the gospel—if there be any other principles of religion constituting a gospel—any thing else, or any thing additional, necessary to make up a gospel, in the fullest and largest sense, then I hesitate not to say the Saviour did not teach a gospel; no, nor did he authorize anybody else to do so.

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." That is the reading, I insist.

I came not to destroy, but to fulfill, said he on another occasion; and so far as I know, all the critics agree that the word *fulfill* would be read quite as correctly, if not more so, to *teach*. Dr. Clarke says the same word, in other places, is rendered "teach." He came to teach. One

of the two great fundamental ends of his manifestation of himself to the world, was to *teach* the then existing Scriptures.

He is announced and spoken of as a *teacher* all over the Scriptures in many places; and as a teacher of religion, I affirm that he did not teach *any thing* beyond the religion of the Old Testament. He came not to set up a "new religion," but a new, more popular, more accommodating, better adapted system, of teaching the already written religion. He came not to "found" a religion, but to enforce and teach the one he had already founded, or revealed rather. He came not to "introduce Christianity," but to teach the Christianity he had introduced four thousand years before.

"Did not our hearts burn within us," said the two disciples; and why? Was it because the Saviour informed them that he was about to set up his kingdom? Because the "new dispensation" was about to be ushered in? Because the Old Covenant, with which they had become familiar, had come to an end, and a new, and superior, and different one was about to succeed it? Because the Saviour was about to "change the religion of the world"? Because the Jews were about to be cursed out of the Church, and out of the favor of God, and the Gentiles—somebody else besides Jews—were to be "brought in"? No, no, no!

Their hearts burned for other and different reasons entirely. No such things as these were hinted at; but *while he opened to them the Scriptures*—while he explained to them more fully their own religion—their hearts were so thrilled and exercised. It was Judaism, the written Judaism of the Old Testament—pure, not false Judaism, that so fired their souls. The Saviour explained to them the religion of Moses—the divine promises, conditions, and principles of salvation, which were as old as Abel, with

nothing "new" about it. It was this that so exercised the hearts of Cleopas and his companion.

I beg pardon of some of St. Paul's interpreters, while I refuse to believe there is any "new dispensation" in the sense they mean; that there is any "new" and superior "covenant" in the sense they mean; while I decline to believe in any "new sect," or "new religion," in the sense they mean; while, indeed, I decline to receive any such "Christianity," with its "peculiarities," and new doctrines, as they tell us the Saviour introduced; while I repudiate such a "kingdom of Christ" as they explain upon their chronological principles and distinctions.

On the contrary, I hold the Emmanuelship of the Godhead to be a far higher, holier, more rational, and more *true* principle, than an attempt to exhibit and to prove divine mutability, fickleness, and instability. The "advent of Christ," as we call it, was not, as it respects the Godhead, a merely adventitious thing, a circumstance which turned out that way, like the birth of a man or the accession of a king; but is rather a great, and to us, incomprehensible aspect of the Divine unity, the Divine existence, and the Divine glory. Viewed from a point of observation infinitely wise, it is cumbered with no chronological rules or restrictions; it is subject to no such laws as we would be compelled to apply to that one mode of existence which alone is known to us.

From earth this view is very obscure, is but partially intelligible, has no parallel, nor scarcely a faint similitude. We err, therefore, when we make the Saviour a new-comer—that he then began, at some date, to exist, or to supervise the affairs of the world. We forget that, in so doing, we violate one of the most fundamental and important doctrines of theology. This very same person whom we call Jesus, was the administrator and supervisor

of the affairs of earth—of man, his faith, and his Church, in antediluvian times, in the deliverance from Egypt, the instructions of Sinai, the schooling of the prophets, no more and no less than in the visibilities of the atonement, or the teaching of the apostles. In himself, he was no more—no more conspicuous—no more distinguished, acted no more important a part in the affairs of mankind, in the days of John or Pilate, than in those of Abraham or Enoch.

We err, therefore, when, by a mere piece of biographical literature, we undertake to make a "Life of Christ," and familiarize earthly biography and incident with the great and eternal principles of existence, which have in them nothing sensuous, nothing physical.

This earth and its affairs were committed to the lordship of Christ from its very foundations. Christ was the Logos, Jesus was the appearance.

A "Life" of Cæsar, or of any other man, would be mere biographical truth; but the Emmanuelship of the Godhead is something infinitely higher, infinitely holier. Its administration, purpose, and intervention so wonderfully exalt, sublimiate, and portray the divine mercy, that any mere biography of Jesus, as it was seen in Palestine, is so far from placing the Emmanuel in a favorable light, even to our feeble perceptions, that, write it as you may, it throws but a dim light upon the canvas, and can, at best, but exhibit a scantling of the divine mercy and condescension.

Still we are not, by any means, to undervalue the divine biography, nor condemn any wise and pious attempts to present *that* in attracting forms and better points of light before these dull visual organs of ours; but as we write and as we read, we should remember that the true glory and proper exaltation of Christ Jesus is not to be deduced

solely from any or all of these mere facts in the history of Palestine.

And if we are dependent on history for historic truth, be it so, and let us be content with our lot; but let us not make history prove more than it was designed to prove. While Jesus was a man, he was one of the triune aspects of the Deity. Nothing is gained, therefore, to the divine glory by attempts to overstrain the merely human acts of the man.

It is the intimate and inseparable connection of the Saviour with the divine unity of Jehovah—the hypostatic union, which gives both to his person and his work the distinctive and exclusive peculiarity which forms the foundation of the Christian faith. It is this connection, and not the mere acts themselves, which invests the man with the divine character. The lips of the man do not utter mere human wisdom—they speak forth the oracles of the enshrined divinity within. The divinity compassed him, enshrouded him, exhibited him. Thomas touched his very flesh, and in the ecstasy of a newly-inspired devotion, cried out, “My Lord and my God!”

It is this connection, and this alone, which gives that soft, mysterious, and wonderfully persuasive influence to his example. This, indeed, was a human example, or else how could it be an example to us? An angel could not set an example to man; neither could God, viewed in his essential spirituality, be an example to us. We can recognize no exemplar but a man like ourselves. Yet all this rested upon the basis of a higher and holier principle than man’s nature—all was exalted and glorified by the latent Godhead. Like a cloud radiant with the tints of loveliness, tempered to the human eye, but still deriving its luster, its grandeur, and magnificence from the very sun which it veils from us.

It is a mistaken attempt, therefore, with some writers to make out that Christ did a great many of such ecclesiastical and religious things as pertain to a pope. This does not honor the Saviour. He was not great in that sense. His true greatness consisted in his divinity. The religion and ethics of mankind depended upon him both for its expediency and its truth—those in the days of the apostles, or in our day, or future years, no more than those in the days of Abel, of Noah, or of Moses. His life and his death sealed the whole with one single seal and signet.

Christ was not an ecclesiastic nor a pope; he was God. His atonement was not made eighteen hundred years ago; it was made at least as long ago as the early days of Adam. All that was done about it eighteen hundred years ago, was a mere exhibition, or manifestation of the great fact, intended merely for such eyes and comprehension as could not otherwise discern, or know, or appreciate it. Christ was God *manifest*.

Many authors write as though the mediatorial work of Christ was entered upon in the days of John. Before that we had no Christ—no Christianity—only a “legal dispensation;” and so we have, now and then, a strangely-conceived “Life of Christ,” put forth in the form of human biography. These restricted views of the great work of the Saviour of mankind are, in my view, greatly dishonoring. With a volume of logic and testimony, they prove to us that Christ was “greater than Moses!” During the first four thousand years of the world, they recognize in him no mediatorial work—no great and overwhelming displays of the divine glory in Christ. A Saviour, they tell us, was *promised* by and by. Wait, and he will come and be installed into office after a while. The lifetime of Christ, as we have it portrayed oftentimes, was the lifetime of a man. They recognize in him no teaching, no headship of

the Church, no supervising care over the pious, no dispensation of divine grace, nor administration of divine mercy, nor Christian discipline, nor authorship of Christian salvation, until the incoming of a chronological period, which they tell us chronologers and historians have named with the title of "Christianity!"

CHAPTER XL.

THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES, AND THEIR COMMON INCORPORATION WITH THE JEWS IN THE BLESSINGS OF TRUE RELIGION, WAS ALWAYS A JEWISH DOCTRINE.

How far some, or even most of the Jews, at the time of Christ, or at any other time, may have understood the religion of the Jewish Scriptures, is one thing; what those Scriptures really teach and enjoin, is another. Judaism is "the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews." This religion is written, and is the same, notwithstanding any misreadings or misunderstandings of it by these or those persons. Along near the period of Christ, there was a good deal of misconstruction of Scripture. History accounts for this.

During and after the captivity, there was more mixing of Jews with other nations; and so leading men imbibed more of heathen speculative philosophy—as such views were commonly called—than formerly. And then, as you approach near to the time of Christ, we find those schools, sometimes called sects—the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. These bore no resemblance to what we now call sects or denominations, but were small, exclusive associations, or societies, for the encouragement and propagation of opinions or doctrines in philosophy, so called, and philosophic and speculative theology.

These schools of philosophy went out and cultivated

acquaintance with, and gathered up opinions and doctrines among, the Greeks and Romans chiefly; and though they did not adopt any of them—so far as they were strictly religious—yet it is easy to see, that in process of time, the religion of the Church would become, by little and little, tainted and burdened with them. These associations, though small in number, were large in influence, because of their learning and high pretensions to knowledge.

One of these late Hebrew errors, thus generated, was the doctrine of the utter religious extirpation of all Gentile people. Salvation is of the Jews, was a great and important truth, much misunderstood. It was then, as it is now, the *Church* on the one hand, and the “*world*” on the other. This was the general division of the pious and the wicked. The Church was called by the common name of Jews—all others out of the Church were called Gentiles. The rule of religion was the same then as now, though not so well understood. Those who stood aloof from the Church—from true religion—would be lost. The only salvation for irreligious outsiders is to leave their irreligious ways, come into the Church, and be religious. The Saviour said to the woman of Samaria, “Salvation is of the Jews.” This is equivalent to saying that *salvation is of the Church*. This is the law always. How far the error among the Jews at that time extended, of Jewish exclusiveness, connected with the notion of ecclesiastical descent lineally from Jacob, we cannot now well ascertain; but these errors, whatever they were, were not the Jewish religion, but mistakes respecting it.

The doctrine of the Jewish Church was, that salvation was fully and freely offered to all mankind. Their doctrine on this subject is plain; and it is, and always was, that the design of the Almighty always was to extend his freely-offered grace to all mankind; and that the tendency of the

Church and its religion was to associate all mankind in one common brotherhood in Christ. This always was, and is now, the doctrine of the Church.

What was the character of the mission of Jonah to Nineveh? Was it not to spread religious truth, and invite all men to embrace it? And how extensively the revelation of Christ, and salvation through him, may have been spread among the nations, in the lapse of ages, by various means, who can tell? Many, many things occurred in those long, long periods, which are not noted in the history. Whence came the Eastern sages at the birth of Christ? What were their views of Christianity? and whom did they represent? The doctrine of the Church is plain: it was, as it is now, to disciple all nations.

But I do not say that everybody so understood it. Thousands—in some places whole communities—do not so understand it at this day. Thousands, perhaps, or at least some with whom the Saviour met, did not so understand their religion.

If any one doubts that the doctrine of the Church, at and before the time of Christ, was as I state it, let him turn to Ps. xxii. 27, Isa. ix. 2, xiv. 1, Ps. ii. 8, Isa. ii. 2, xi. 10, lx. 10, Ps. ix. 20, xlvii. 8, Isa. xlii. 1–4, xlix. 5–8, and many other places. Their doctrine was that “all kings shall fall down before him.” They received the teaching of Habakkuk, who said, “The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” And they believed many similar expressions from other Jewish teachers.

But we are told that the Jews did not believe it. I ask, what Jews? I have cited above the teachings of some Jews who did believe it, because they not only taught, but wrote it, and proclaimed it abroad under the spirit of inspiration; and for more than seven hundred years it was,

Sabbath after Sabbath, read in all the Churches. It was the well-established religion of the Church; as well established then as it is now, though there were, and still are, some who do not believe it. The Saviour met, we are told, with some of these persons who seemed to understand the religion of their Church but very imperfectly on this as well as many other subjects; but the rule is, and always was, that "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

There never was any religion in the Church which restricted salvation to anybody. From the day a Saviour was promised till this day, it was as wide as Isaiah proclaimed it: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" and as the Saviour proclaimed it: "Come unto me all ye that labor." The doctrine of the Church, wide, open, and well understood, always was, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." Special efforts were early made for a special people, for prudential and merciful reasons; but the religion of the Church, from the first and always, contemplated the complete and final subjugation of the entire race.

And not only was the salvation of all men the doctrine of the Church before Christ, but, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," was also taught by Isaiah, and quoted from him by Paul. It was, therefore, always the doctrine of the Church that it was the then present duty of all men to join the people of God, and be "now" saved by Christ.

How, then, is it that we are so often told that, under the "Jewish dispensation," religion was *restricted* to a particular people? A more glaring error could scarcely be taught. Religion was never any more confined nor restricted than it is now. The doctrine of the Church on these subjects is now what it always was.

CHAPTER XLI.

“AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH,” WAS
NEVER A JEWISH DOCTRINE.

THE doctrine of personal retaliation—“an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”—to love your friends and hate your enemies—is, by some, said to be the whole rule of ethics, under the “*Jewish* dispensation;” while under the *Christian*, it is to resist not evil, but to love your enemies; and I have had the misfortune to hear this doctrine *explained* in this way, both in the books and in the pulpit. The Christian dispensation, it is said, opened with a higher and purer rule of morals than that which belonged to the law of Moses. Then we have a low and imperfect rule of morals prescribed to the Jews, and a higher and better rule for Christians.

It seems to me a deduction of reason, that it would be impossible for God, at any time of the world, to prescribe a rule of morals below that which meets the character of God and the nature of man, and the relation between them, as established by the divine constitution.

This class of teaching is entirely misunderstood. The laws referred to by the Saviour are very briefly alluded to in Ex. xxi. 24, Lev. xxiv. 20, and Deut. xix. 21. What these laws were, fully and in detail, we have no means now of knowing. They were civil laws, to be administered by

judges or magistrates in adjudicating the rights of parties litigant, and not mere rules for the regulation of private, individual conduct. So far as we see, from the brief allusions to them which we have, they seem to be substantially the same kind of laws we have now; that is, the great law of equivalents, or of equity between man and man. If a man take or destroy the property of another, he shall return an equivalent; or if the nature of the offense or crime be such that this is impossible, so far as the injured person is concerned, then he shall suffer punishment graduated to the crime as near as may be.

This is the law now. The English constitution and common law, and American statutes, are based upon it. He who reads personal retaliations, or private wrongs, in these laws of Moses, reads that which was never there—that which was never dreamed of in them. The great European and American jurists understood them better.

The Saviour, in his day, met with those who misunderstood the Scriptures; and he explained to them the true meaning thereof. It is not very strange that those divine teachings should be misconstrued—in the Saviour's time—to mean private revenge, since they are so misconstrued by some now; nor is it strange that the Saviour should administer to them a sound and authoritative exposition of those divine teachings. As in all other cases, the Saviour taught a *conformity to the Scriptures*, not a *departure from* them. He was himself expounding the law.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. That is, you have heard erroneous teachings of the Scriptures; you have listened to those who perverted the true teachings of Scripture, and who taught what the Scriptures do not teach. Listen now to me, and I will teach you, not a new doctrine, though it may be new to you; I will teach you the true Scripture teaching.”

This is in substance the things which the Saviour said. He explained to them what the Scripture *was*, instead of teaching them for doctrine what it was *not*.

And if any man doubts this, let him look into the Old Testament, and see if he can find private revenge prescribed as part of its religion.

CHAPTER XLII.

WHEN AND WHERE DO WE FIND THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY?

DR. SCHAFF, in his *History of the Church*, page 17, says: "The *beginning* of Church history is properly the incarnation of the Son of God." "But since the Church, as an organic union of the disciples of Jesus, comes into view first on the day of Pentecost, we may take this point as the beginning." And, generally, he pursues the old, contradictory argument, first on one side and then on the other, that previously to this time the association of religious people, under the divine directions, *was*, and *was not*, the true and proper Church of the living God.

Dr. Schaff, in direct, and, I regret to add, in rather fashionable hostility with himself, would meet you very stoutly at the threshold, with abundance of refuting arguments, if you were to attempt to hold that all along previous to the coming of Christ there was not a regular, true, and proper Church. And, with Mr. Watson, he would tell you that, "at the coming of Christ, there was not one Church taken away, and another set up in its room; but *the Church continued the same*." And yet, when his Anabaptist competitor is out of sight, and he is writing about what he calls "*Christianity*," he tells you *the beginning* of Church history is practically at the day of Pentecost, but really and legally

at the incarnation. Previously there was no Church, and, of course, no Church history!

Neander, Gieseler, and a dozen other authors easily named, fix *the origin of the Church* at the time of the Christian era, when speaking of the Church in a more or less historical kind of way. But the same authors, or some of them, and many others, who readily receive their teachings in this regard, when in the lists of polemics, on some questions which inquire into the unity of the Church, contend that the Church existed in all its completeness, from the days of Abraham at least. Both things cannot be true. One is, and the other is not.

The title-page to *Ruter's Gregory* is, "A Concise History of the Christian Church, from *its first establishment* to the present time." This "first establishment" of the Church was at the time of the apostles, where he separates between "the Jewish religion" and "the Christian dispensation." And this glaring and important violation of historic truth is officially taught to thousands of under-graduates in the ministry; and they are thus left with the confused and contradictory lessons that the Church *did* absolutely, and that it most certainly did *not*, begin to exist about eighteen hundred years ago!

Nevin, in his *Biblical Antiquities*, in his table of contents, tells us about the "Organization of the Jewish Church," which he explains in his text. He also teaches us all about the "Continuance of the Jewish Church all its appointed time." This *appointed time*, limited for the continuance of *this* Church, was at the period of the preaching of Peter and John. Now, this Church ceased to exist when "the Christian Church" came into being—a new and widely different thing—embodying a truer and better religion. The old was "Jewish," and the new is "Christian."

Not many years ago, I listened to a Doctor of Divinity

of considerable note, while he preached to a large and intelligent city congregation. He labored to set forth that Christ and the apostles, in the first establishment of Christianity, had to meet and successfully contend against two great and very powerful competitors or enemies. First, there stood *Idolatry*, the false religion of surrounding nations, with its firm front and deep-rooted influence; and, second, there was *Judaism*, with its mummery of forms, falsehoods, and prejudices. These two false systems of religion stood right in the way of the establishment and progress of Christianity, the only true religion.

But while he was preaching, I could not repress the inquiry which kept forcing itself upon my mind, whether this same Judaism, which was such a powerful and bold opponent of true religion, was not this day, word for word, a very large portion of the Christian Bible. And if I am not mistaken, the Doctor was himself so far from repudiating it, that he took his text on the occasion from a portion of it.

Revealed religion—no matter when it was revealed—must be true; and cannot, therefore, conflict with any thing else that is true. But religion is not true *because* it is revealed; it was revealed *because it was true*. It was just as true before it was revealed as afterward; and if it had never been revealed, would have remained just as true.

Then it is impossible there could be two religions—one for Jews, and one for Gentiles.

The word *Christianity* is the name of a certain written system of religion. When was that system of religion first written? or, in other words, when did Christianity *originate*? Will any man say that this system of religion, or any distinct, integral portion or doctrine of it, originated about the time of the Christian era? No man can

say that, for there is, every part of it, written and published many hundred years previously. It has been shown in a previous chapter—and I presume no man will for a moment attempt to question that distinct proposition—that there is not a doctrine of either religion or ethics written in the New Testament, which is not also found written in the Old.

Nothing is more common among a certain class of writers, than to see Christ spoken of as the author of the Christian religion. This is certainly most true, if it be understood that, as God, he produced the system in the beginning. But it is utterly untrue, if it be meant that he produced it eighteen hundred years ago. They speak of “the peculiar doctrines of Christianity,” meaning thereby religious doctrines different from those known to the Church before the days of Christ. But I have not known any man attempt to specify or describe any such “peculiar” doctrines. And I deny that there are any.

Watson’s Dictionary, Art. *Church*, tells us most explicitly, and argues it most conclusively, that at the coming of Christ there was no *change* in the Church, except mere incidental changes, such as might be necessary at any time in some external matters, and were rendered necessary by the mere *coming* of Messiah. And he explains how erroneous it is for theologians to speak of the “Christian Church,” and the “Jewish Church,” as though these were two different Churches. And yet there are many, very many, places in that same Dictionary, and as many, and perhaps more, in his Institutes, where he clearly inculcates the idea of *two* Churches and *two* religions. He frequently speaks of “the new religion;” of the *origin* of the Christian religion, locating it in Palestine in the days of the Saviour. And he frequently speaks of *Jews* and *Christians* as persons religiously distinct and antagonistic, being there in Pales-

tine in the early preaching of the apostles. This cannot possibly fail to mislead where the teaching is heeded, because it is certain, and no man will for a moment contradict it, that at that time there *could be* no such distinction, because *all the Christians were Jews*. Until about twelve years after the ascension of Christ, when the Church, as recognized by the apostles, must have numbered hundreds of thousands, and probably millions, there was not a person in it but a Jew—no, not one. All the Christians were Jews, and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, which is most probable, of Jews were Christians.

And yet, in many places in his Institutes—in all parts of the book, and in many places in his Dictionary—he speaks of *Jews* and *Christians*, of the Jewish Church and the Christian Church, and of the religion of each as though they were as distinct and dissimilar as any two things can be distinct and dissimilar. He says the Christian Church was *modeled after* the Jewish Church. Then, of course, it was another. He tells us of the Church of the Old Testament and of the New as two different Churches. In many places, in various incidental expressions, he teaches of these *two* Churches, and *two* religions; and he *is* so understood by many of the ministers of his Church.

Mr. Watson teaches that true religion, revealed from heaven, was abundantly known and practiced among men in very ancient times and ever since. And he also teaches that “Christianity” was first introduced into the world in the days of our Saviour, eighteen hundred years ago. Both these things cannot be true.

Christianity originated when the conditions of salvation were first revealed from heaven to earth, and, with all Christian precepts, are written in the Old Testament. This will be more fully seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLIII.

EVERY THING MAKING UP THE SYSTEM OF RELIGION, WHICH WE COMMONLY CALL THE GOSPEL, IS WRITTEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

It has heretofore been shown, in Chapter XXII., that all the doctrines of religion taught in the New Testament are likewise taught in the Old; and it will now be shown that the gospel, in its broadest sense, as a system of divine teaching, embracing religion and ethics in all its ramifications and varied aspects, is also found in the Old Testament.

The following quotations cover all the ground occupied by Scripture revelation. I will cite but a very few texts on each point. To cite them all, would require this chapter to be lengthened out until it would become almost a Bible-dictionary. In referring to them, it will frequently be necessary to refer to the context, sometimes for several verses.

Men are adopted by God's free grace—Ezek. xvi. 3-6, Num. vi. 27, Isa. lxiii. 16. The affections should be supremely set on God—Deut. vi. 5, Ps. xlii. 1, lxxiii. 25, cxix. 10. Consolation under affliction—Isa. iii. 12, lxvi. 13, Ezek. xiv. 22. The duty of relieving the distresses of others—Job xxxi. 19, Isa. lviii. 10. Angels—Neh. ix. 6, 1 Kings xix. 5. Forbidding the indulgence of anger—Ecc. vii. 9, Prov. xii. 16, xiv. 29. The anger of God is averted by confession and repentance—Job xxxiii. 27, Ps. cvi. 43-45.

Christ is the anointed—Ps. xlv. 7, Isa. lxi. 1. Apostasy—Deut. xiii. 13, Zeph. i. 4–6. The ascension of Christ—Ps. xxiv. 7—compare Levit. xvi. 15, with Heb. vi. 20. Atonement—Isa. liii. 4–12, Dan. ix. 24–27. Backsliding—1 Kings xi. 9, Ps. lxxviii. 57–59. Baptism with the Holy Ghost—Ezek. xxxvi. 25. The blessedness of those who know the gospel—Ps. lxxxix. 15; and of those whose sins are forgiven—Ps. xxxii. 1, 2; and of those who trust in God—Ps. ii. 12, xxxiv. 8, lxxxiv. 12, Jer. xvii. 7. Judicial blindness—Ps. lxix. 23, Isa. xx. 10. The character of saints—Prov. xxviii. 1, Mal. iii. 16, Deut. vii. 6. Character of the wicked—Ps. x. 3, xlix. 6, Neh. iv. 8. Chastity—Ex. xx. 14, Prov. xxxi. 3; required in look and in heart—Job xxxi. 1, Prov. vi. 25. Christ the Head of the Church—Ps. cxviii. 22. He is a high priest—Num. xxiv. 17, Isa. ix. 7. Christ the great shepherd—Isa. xl. 11, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24. The Church of God—Deut. iv. 5–14, xxvi. 18, x. 8, Gen. xvii. 10–14, Ex. xxix. 9. The universal law of life—Ex. xx. 3–17. Communion of saints—Mal. iii. 16, Ps. xvi. 3, xlii. 4, cxxxiii. 1–3. The Lord's Supper—Ex. xii. 21–28. Confession of sin—Hosea v. 15, Job xxxiii. 27, Dan. ix. 20. The witness of the conscience—Prov. xx. 27, 1 Samuel xxiv. 5. Conversion—1 Kings xviii. 37, Prov. i. 23, Ps. xix. 7, Ezek. xviii. 23. The purposes and counsels of God—Jer. xxxii. 19, Isa. xxviii. 29. Covetousness—Ezek. xxxiii. 31, Ecc. v. 10. Eternal death—Prov. xiv. 12. The death of Christ—Isa. liii. 8, Dan. ix. 26. Peace in death to saints—Isa. lvii. 2, Ps. xxiii. 4, Job xiv. 14. The wicked die in their sins—Ezek. iii. 19. Delight in God—Ps. xxxvii. 4. The devil—Gen. iii. 1–6, Zech. iii. 1. Devotedness to God—Ps. cxix. 38, 1 Samuel xii. 24. Disobedience to God—Ps. lxxviii. 10–40, 1 Samuel xiii. 14. False doctrine—Jer. xxiii. 16, xxix. 8. The Old Testament contains the gospel—2 Tim. iii. 16. Drunkenness—Isa.

xxviii. 8. v. 11, Hosea iv. 11. Envy forbidden—Prov. iii. 31. The excellency and glory of the Church—Isa. lx. 1, xliii. 4, Ps. xcvi. 6. The faithfulness of God—Isa. xlix. 7, Ps. lxxxix. 8. The fall of man—Gen. iii. 6, 11, 12, ii. 14. Fasting—Isa. lviii. 6, 7, Zech. vii. 5, Ps. lxix. 10. Godly fear—Isa. viii. 13, Jer. xxxii. 29–40. Forgiveness of injuries—Ps. vii. 4, Gen. xlv. 5–11. Friendship with God—Ex. xxxiii. 11, 2 Chron. xx. 7. The Gentiles are given to Christ—Ps. ii. 8, Isa. ii. 2. Glorifying God—1 Chron. xvi. 28, Isa. xlii. 12. The majesty and glory of God—Job xxxvii. 22, Ps. xciii. 1, Isa. ii. 10. God is light—Isa. lx. 19; is invisible—Job xxiii. 8, 9; is eternal—Deut. xxxiii. 27; is omniscient—Prov. v. 21; is omnipresent—Jer. xxiii. 23; is immutable—Ps. cii. 26; is glorious—Ex. xv. 11; is most high—Ps. xxxviii. 18; is holy—Ps. xcix. 9; is just—Isa. xlv. 21; is true—Jer. x. 10; is upright—Ps. xxv. 8; is righteous—Ezek. xxxiv. 6; is faithful—Deut. xxxii. 4; is merciful—Ex. xxxiv. 6; is long-suffering—Num. xiv. 18; is jealous—Josh. xxiv. 19; is compassionate—2 Kings xiii. 23; fills heaven and earth—1 Kings viii. 27. The goodness of God is great—Neh. ix. 35; is rich—Ps. civ. 24; is abundant—Ex. xxxiv. 6; is satisfying—Jer. xxxi. 12; is enduring—Ps. xxiii. 6. The gospel—Isa. lii. 7; was preached under the Old Testament—Heb. iv. 2. Grace—Ps. lxxxiv. 11, Zech. xii. 10. Happiness of saints in this life—Ps. lxxiii. 25, Prov. iii. 17. Hatred forbidden—Lev. xix. 17, Prov. x. 18. Punishment of those who hate Christ—Ps. ii. 2–9, xxi. 8. The character of the renewed heart; it is inclined to seek God—2 Chron. xi. 16; is fixed on God—Ps. lvii. 7; is joyful in God—1 Samuel ii. 1; is perfect with God—1 Kings viii. 61; is upright—Ps. xcvi. 11; is clean—Ps. lxxiii. 1; is pure, content, obedient, filled with the law of God, void of fear, desirous of God, faithful, prayerful, etc., etc. The unre-

newed heart is described and explained in more than fifty places, and its character pointed out in many more. The salvation of the heathen foretold—Gen. xii. 3, Isa. ii. 2–4. Heaven—Ps. lxxxix. 29, Jer. xxxi. 37. Hell—Isa. xxxiii. 14, Ps. ix. 17. Religion is the way of holiness—Isa. xxxv. 8. The holiness of God is set forth in many places. The Comforter is given by Christ—Isa. lxi. 3. The Holy Ghost is God—Ex. xvii. 7, Isa. vi. 3; is the Spirit of wisdom—Isa. xi. 2. Hospitality to the poor—Isa. lviii. 7; and to our enemies—2 Kings vi. 22. The human nature of Christ—Isa. liii. 3, 4, Jer. xxxi. 22. The duty and benefits of humility—Ps. cxxxviii. 6, Isa. lvii. 15. The humility of Christ—Zech. ix. 9, Isa. l. 6. Hypocrisy—Isa. xxix. 15, xxxii. 26. Idolatry—Isa. xlv. 17, Deut. viii. 19. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost—Ezek. xxxvi. 27, Isa. lxiii. 11. The wickedness of ingratitude—Isa. i. 2, 3, Jer. ii. 11. Injustice—Deut. xvi. 19, Prov. xxii. 16. Inspiration of the Holy Ghost—Joel ii. 28. Joy provided—Isa. xxxv. 10, Ps. xcvi. 11. The judgments of God—Amos iii. 6, Mic. vi. 9. The general judgment—1 Chron. xvi. 3, Ecc. iii. 17. Justification—Isa. xlv. 25. Justification by faith—Hab. ii. 4. The law of God was given to the Israelites—Ex. xx. 2, Ps. lxxviii. 5. Christian liberality—Isa. lxi. 1, xlii. 7. Spiritual life—Ps. xxxvi. 9, Ezek. xxxvii. 14, Isa. lv. 3. The love of Christ—Prov. viii. 17. The love of God—Hos. xi. 4. We are commanded to love God with all the heart—Deut. vi. 5. The loving kindness of God—Neh. ix. 17, Ps. xl. 11. Man is born in sin—Ps. li. 5. The whole duty of man—Ecc. xii. 13. Ministers should be pure—Isa. lii. 11, Lev. xxi. 6. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost—Joel ii. 28. The sin of murder—Deut. v. 17. The new birth—Ezek. xxxvi. 26, Jer. xxiv. 7. Offenses against the Holy Ghost—Isa. lxiii. 10. Pardon of sin—Isa. i. 8, Jer. xxxi. 34. Outward purifications insufficient—Job ix. 30, Jer. ii.

22. Patience and submission—Isa. liii. 7. God is the author of peace—Ps. cxlvii. 14; and bestows peace on those who obey him—Lev. xxvi. 6. The Holy Ghost appoints and commissions ministers—Isa. xlviii. 16. God is to be praised—2 Samuel xxii. 4; and glorified—Ps. xxii. 26. Prayer is commanded—Isa. lv. 6; is to be offered to God—Ps. v. 2; and God hears it—Ps. x. 17; and answers it—Ps. xcix. 6, Isa. lviii. 9. The heart is lifted up in prayer—Lam. iii. 41; and poured out—Ps. lxii. 8; and the soul is poured out—1 Samuel i. 15. Calling on the name of the Lord—Gen. xii. 8; and calling upon God—Ps. xxvii. 7. Drawing near to God—Ps. lxxiii. 28. Public prayer is acceptable to God—Isa. lvi. 7. God promises to hear public prayer—2 Chron. vii. 14-16; and bless it—Ex. xx. 24. The sin of pride—Prov. xxiv. 4. It is hateful to God—Prov. vi. 16. God is the only sure protection—Ps. cxxvii. 1. His protection is offered to sinners—Job xxii. 23-25. He protects the oppressed—Ps. ix. 9; and the Church—Ps. lxxxiv. 3. God's care is over his works—Ps. cxlv. 9. His providence is over his creatures—Neh. ix. 6. The special preservation of saints—Ps. xxxvii. 28. The punishment of the wicked is of God—Lev. xxvi. 18. He punishes sin—Lam. iii. 39. Rebellion against God—Num. xiv. 19. It provokes God—Num. xiii. 30. God redeems from all iniquity—Ps. cxxx. 8; and from all evil—Gen. xlviii. 16; and from death—Hosea xiii. 14. Repentance is by the operation of the Holy Ghost—Zech. xii. 10. The long-suffering of God leads to it—Gen. vi. 3. The chastisements of God should lead to it—1 Kings viii. 47. Shame and confusion in repentance—Ezra ix. 6-15, Jer. xxxi. 19. Repentance leads to prayer—1 Kings viii. 33; and to conversion—2 Chron. vi. 26. Exhortations to repentance—Ezek. xiv. 6, xviii. 30. The resurrection of Christ—Ps. xvi. 10, Isa. xxvi. 19. It was to fulfill the Old Testament Scrip-

tures—Luke xxiv. 45, 46. The resurrection a doctrine of the Old Testament—Job xix. 26, Ps. xlix. 15, Isa. xxvi. 19. The saints will rise to life eternal—Dan. xii. 2. The wicked will rise to everlasting contempt—Dan. xii. 2. Revenge forbidden—Lev. xix. 18; it proceeds from a spiteful heart—Ezek. xxv. 15. Instead of taking revenge, we should trust in God—Prov. xx. 22. Reviling and reproaching—Ps. lxxiv. 22, Zeph. ii. 8. The redeemed behold the face of God—Ps. xvii. 15. God gives riches—1 Samuel ii. 7, Ecc. v. 19; but riches are temporary—Prov. xxvii. 74; and uncertain—Ecc. iv. 8; and unsatisfying—Ecc. v. 10; and fleeting—Prov. xxiii. 5; and perishable—Jer. xlviii. 36; and often engender pride—Ezek. xxviii. 5; and forgetfulness of God—Deut. viii. 13; and forsaking of God—Deut. xxxii. 15. They produce an overbearing spirit—Prov. xviii. 32; and lead to violence—Mic. vi. 12; and bring trouble—Prov. xv. 27; and more than forty other wholesome teachings on the subject of riches might be referred to. Righteousness is obedience to God's law—Deut. vi. 25. God loves it—Ps. xi. 7; and looks for it—Isa. v. 7. The Lord is our righteousness—Jer. xxiii. 6. The righteousness of God—Ps. vii. 9, lxxi. 19. It is beyond comprehension—Ps. lxxi. 15; and is everlasting—Ps. cxi. 3. The Sabbath—Gen. ii. 3; grounds of it—Gen. ii. 2, Ex. xx. 9, 10; to be observed—Neh. x. 31, Jer. xvii. 21. The saints are compared to the sun—Judges v. 31; and to light—Dan. xii. 3; and to gold—Lam. iv. 2, Job xxiii. 10. Salvation is of God—Ps. iii. 8; and by Christ—Isa. lxiii. 9; and by Christ alone—Isa. xlv. 21, 22, lix. 16. Salvation is for the Gentiles—Isa. xlv. 22; it is of mercy—Ps. vi. 4; and is far from the wicked—Ps. cxix. 155, Isa. lix. 11. Sanctification—Ps. iv. 3; effected by God—Ezek. xxxvii. 38. Influence of Satan—Job i. 6. Self-delusion—Ps. xlix. 18. Self-denial—Gen. xiii. 9, Dan. v. 16, 17. Self-

examination—Jer. xvii. 9. Self-righteousness—Prov. xxx. 12; warning against it—Deut. ix. 4. Self-will—2 Chron. xxx. 8; wickedness of it—1 Samuel. xv. 23; God knows it—Isa. xlviii. 4; its punishment—Deut. xxi. 21, Prov. xxix. 1. Sin—Gen. viii. 21; came by Adam—Gen. iii. 6. All men born in sin—Ps. li. 5, Gen. v. 3. No man naturally without sin—1 Kings viii. 40. Man cannot cleanse himself of it—Job ix. 30, Jer. ii. 22. No man can atone for sin—Mic. vi. 7. The guilt of attempting to conceal it—Job xxxi. 33. And there are more than one hundred other passages respecting it. National sin—Isa. i. 5, Jer. v. 1–5; often caused by prosperity—Deut. xxxii. 15, Ezek. xxviii. 5. The devil tempts us—1 Chron. xxi. 1. Temptation comes from covetousness—Prov. xxx. 9. Theft is an abomination—Jer. ii. 7–10; and includes fraud in general—Lev. xix. 13. The Trinity—Ex. xx. 2. Trust in God—Ps. lxxv. 5, Prov. xiv. 26; it should be with the whole heart—Prov. iii. 5. Exhortations to trust in God—Ps. iv. 5, cxv. 9–11. God is a God of truth—Deut. xxxii. 4, Ps. xxxi. 5. We should serve God in truth—Joshua xxiv. 14, 1 Samuel xii. 24. Vows to be voluntary—Deut. xxiii. 21, 22; to be performed faithfully—Num. xxx. 2. Christians are in warfare with the devil—Gen. iii. 15; compare with 2 Cor. ii. 11, Eph. vi. 12. Watchfulness required in ministers—Ezek. iii. 17, Isa. lxii. 6. The wicked are compared to abominable branches—Isa. xiv. 19; to ashes under feet—Mal. iv. 3; to beasts—Ps. xlix. 12; to the blind—Zeph. i. 17; to briars and thorns—Isa. lv. 13, etc. Religious zeal—Ps. lxxix. 9; godly sorrow leads to it—cxix. 139; compare with 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. It is sometimes misdirected—2 Samuel xxi. 2, etc.

Thus I have quoted about four hundred passages of Old Testament Scripture, on nearly three hundred different subjects of Christian morals and religion; and it will probably

be conceded that they cover all the ground of religion and ethics occupied in all revelation. The subjects in their various phases and modifications could be added to by hundreds more, if necessary, and the quotations supporting them could be doubled, trebled, or quadrupled. Indeed, I know of nothing pertaining to religion or morals which may not be proved by the Old Testament.

And yet, notwithstanding these teachings, numerous as they are, they are still more enlarged and elaborated in the New Testament, though no new principle, tenet, or doctrine is added. Any subject is susceptible of indefinite elaboration.

How, then, do men tell us that "Christianity"—something different from the religion taught in the Old Testament—was set up anew by the Saviour at the time of his advent? It is a mistake—both great and injurious.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE IDEA OF TWO RELIGIONS, WITH THEIR SUPPOSED
"CONTRAST" AND DIFFERENCES, TESTED; AND WHAT IS
"PECULIAR" TO CHRISTIANITY EXAMINED.

WE are frequently taught that there are *two religions*—the *Jewish* and the *Christian*. Sometimes they are called *the law*, and *the gospel*, and sometimes distinguished by other names. They are held to be two different and distinct religious systems. When Christ came, we are told, he set up the *Christian* religion, not only in contradistinction, but in opposition to the *Jewish* religion.

The particular point which I wish to bring forward and controvert in this chapter—doctrine which I have been taught all my life, but which of late years I have utterly disbelieved—is now lying before me, in various forms of teaching, in not less than ten or twenty "standard" authors. I choose to quote from Coleman's *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, merely because I find it there in a succinct and comprehensive form, where I can state it with less volume of quotation than in many others. Mr. Coleman is a highly respectable divine, who has paid a good deal of attention to early Christianity, having written several works of considerable size on the subject.

On page 91, he says: "The grand characteristic of the Christian religion, in distinction from the Jewish—of the

religion of the New Testament contrasted with that of the Old Testament—was, that it utterly excluded all idea of a *mediating* priesthood in the worship of God.”

Here two things are to be noted: First, the two religions are distinct: the Jewish religion is one, the Christian religion is another. They stand “*contrasted*” to each other. Secondly, the principal “*distinction*” is, that the Jewish had a *mediating* priesthood, which was wholly excluded from the *Christian* religion. Thus, he says, “the new and nobler order of the Christian dispensation began.”

In the first place, to suppose two systems of religion which *contrast* with each other, which are *distinct* from each other, is to suppose that one or both are false. Both cannot be supposed to be true. Religion, revealed or unrevealed, to be *true*, is the practical knowledge and exemplification of the relation actually subsisting between God and man. Neither revelation nor any thing else can make that relation different from what it is. Two religions, distinct from each other—the one with, and the other without, a *mediating* priesthood—is both a contradiction and an absurdity, unless you suppose one to be false.

But is there, as simple matter of fact, any difference in the MEDIATING PRIESTHOOD of the religion before and after the coming of Christ? We are not now inquiring how well or how ill any certain persons who lived in the Saviour’s time, or at any other particular time, may have understood their own religion. That the Scriptures have been very much misread, and true religion very much misunderstood at times, is well known. That is one thing. *The religion* known to the Scriptures, since the time of Abraham at least, is written.

It will not be denied, I presume, that the Christ of Christianity, of our religion—the Mediator—occupied the same position in religion before as after his personal appearance.

Surely there are no religious doctrines in all revelation which are not based directly and solely on Christ. They are not based on some indefinite Christ, but on the Son of Mary, the Son of God. Surely his Saviourship did not *begin* at the time of his human advent. To Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Elijah, he was a Saviour in every respect, as he is now. There is not, nor will there ever be, a saved sinner, in whatever age of the world he may have lived, who will not be indebted, in precisely the same way, and to the same extent, to Christ, as any other saved sinner. Christ, and no one else, was his mediating priest. Men write sometimes as if the personal coming of Christ was the *origin of his being*, or the commencement of his Messiahship. It was the peculiar time of his Emmanuelship, but certainly not of his Messiahship.

Then, if he exercised the functions of a mediating priesthood in the salvation of any one man, he did the same thing in the salvation of all saved men in any age.

And then the Jewish religion knew of no such "mediating priesthood" as is alluded to by Mr. Coleman. Christ was their only Priest and Mediator.

Then what sort of *priests* were those spoken of in the Old Testament? In common parlance, the office they held was called *priest*; but surely any one then was as much mistaken as Mr. Coleman is now, if he supposed them to be the priests really mediating between God and man. *This* office is, and always was, discharged by Christ alone. But as the Priest of religion had not then made himself visible to man, it was made a part of the prudential economy of God to pre-represent, to teach beforehand, or to *teach* in a practical way, the mediating work of the true and only Priest, by means of *men*, using them instrumentally, or symbolically, to teach, and only to teach, such things in regard to the Priest as were afterward taught more plainly by different means.

All that these men-priests did was to act the forms and exhibit to the eye the appearances of mediating. It was only a means of teaching the reality of a priesthood. They had no more the functions of priesthood than a moot-court has the functions of judiciary. *It was a mode of teaching Christ.* But to have continued this mode of teaching after the coming of Christ, would have been both meaningless and absurd.

There was therefore here no change in religion, nor in the mediating priesthood at all, but merely a change in the *mode of teaching* one important Christian doctrine. Before Christ and his atoning acts were visible, the thing must needs be taught in some other way, or not be taught at all. But surely the religious doctrine remained the same.

On page 99, Mr. Coleman gives us what he calls the "Doctrinal peculiarities of the Christian system." "Under this head," he says, "we propose merely to specify some of the leading characteristics of the Christian system, as a new and distinct form of religion."

There is at least no misunderstanding of the author's meaning here. Christianity is "*a new and distinct form of religion*" from that of the Old Testament.

The first peculiarity of this *new form of religion*, he says, was that "this system presents the only true form of a *Church*. The Jews had no distinct organization which could with propriety be denominated a Church; much less is any association under other forms of religion entitled to this appellation."

I do not see how the author himself, or any one else, could object to a direct contradiction of this statement. All men will allow that—1st. The Jews, before this time, had a personal and distinct Church-membership. 2d. These members, whether native Israelites or not, were all personally and individually initiated. 3d. They were personally

responsible to the ecclesiastical authorities for good behavior, and on default, were liable to excommunication. 4th. They met in congregations on the Sabbath, for the worship of God, according to the Scriptures. 5th. Their worship consisted in reading publicly the word of God, singing solemn hymns of praise to God, public prayers, and preaching. 6th. These public services were conducted by regular Church-officers, distinct from the laity. 7th. Among these worshipers were at least some of the most holy and pious men and women of whom we have any account in human history. 8th. Their worship was recognized and approved of God.

Now, if that does not constitute a *Church*, then we have none now; for there is nothing now existing among men which has either any higher or any *other* marks of a Church than this.

"*Secondly.* The Christian Church has always been distinguished for its veneration of the Holy Scriptures. The reading and exposition of them has, from the beginning, been an important part of Christian worship. All the instructions and exhortations of the preacher have been drawn from this source."

To this I reply, that however much on this point may be predicated of Christians since Christ, it is well known to all men of reading, that the Holy Scriptures were never held in higher veneration by any living people than by the Jews before Christ. Mr. Watson—Theological Institutes, p. 80—explains and proves at considerable length this high veneration for Scripture; and he quotes from Philo, Josephus, and Eusebius, on the subject. Indeed, the high sacredness in which the Scriptures were held by these people, is a most prominent characteristic of them. In the regular Sabbath-day worship they were always read, with scrupulous exactness.

As for "its veneration of the Holy Scriptures," therefore, being a *peculiarity* of what he calls Christianity—that is, of the Church since the Advent—it is well known, and palpably known, that the fact stated is not true; it has not one word of reliable history to support it, but is contradicted by all the reliable history, both in and out of Scripture.

"*Thirdly.* The doctrine of the Trinity, and of the divinity of Christ, are the distinguishing characteristics of the Christian system."

Understanding him to mean that this distinguishes Christians since Christ from Jews previously, I am compelled to say that he is not only wholly but egregiously mistaken. The statement is wildly and notoriously in the face of truth; and I appeal to the Scriptures.

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace"—Isa. ix. 6. "He shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"—Jer. xxiii. 6. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God"—Isa. xl. 3. And I have now lying before me more than forty selected passages from the Old Testament, proving not only the divinity of Christ, but some of them proving that this doctrine was well understood by many of the Old Testament saints. The word *Trinity* does not occur in Scripture, I believe; it results from the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and of Christ, considered in connection with the oneness of God. This is found in many places in the Old Testament. See Ex. xvii. 7, Num. xii. 6, Isa. vi. 3, Ps. lxxviii. 17-21, etc.

Most assuredly the doctrine that we call *Trinity* is not peculiar to the post-Messianic period of the Church.

"*Fourthly.* It is peculiar to the Christian religion that all people take part in their religious services."

No, sir! by no means. Worship before the time of

Christ was eminently popular—perhaps as much so, comparatively, as since. At that time there were, in Jerusalem alone, not less than four hundred places of popular congregational worship; and there were also churches—commonly called synagogues—all over the country, wherever there were Jews—that is, wherever there were religious people. This Sabbath-day, congregational worship, was similar to that observed by us now. It varied then a great deal in different times and places, and in the notions and habits of the people, as it does now; but there is no radical difference. Will any man say that personal, individual worship was not recognized and enjoined in the Church before the coming of Christ? The statement would and does contradict one of the most plain and notorious truths seen upon the face of the Old Testament.

“Fifthly. It is the peculiar privilege of the Christian that he may worship God, not at some appointed place, and at stated seasons, but at all times, and in every place.”

I marvel that such teaching passes unrebuked for a single day. It is no less than a plain contradiction of what everybody knows to be true. It is notorious that the Jews before Christ enjoyed generally—at least so far as the Church was concerned—all the religious privileges and advantages which are here attributed to “Christians” by Mr. Coleman.

It is not written in the Scriptures, either in terms or by any fair inference, that the worshipers of God before Christ were exclusively confined in their worship to “some appointed place,” or to some “stated season;” but on the contrary, it is as plainly and fully written as it is that men worship at all, that they worshiped publicly on every Sabbath-day, and that private and family worship were both enjoined and practiced. And as to the places of worship, we well know that they erected houses for this purpose without restriction, here, there, and everywhere, as the

wishes or convenience of the people required. It may be read in all Palestinean history, in Horne, Watson, etc., that the Church had about four hundred such places of worship in the city of Jerusalem alone, as before stated; and that all over Palestine, and everywhere else in other countries, wherever needed, such places of worship were seen in abundance.

It is surprising that Mr. Coleman had not read of the pious habits of Daniel, so far, at least, as to know whether he did not *worship God* "in his chamber," when he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. And it is remarkable indeed, that he had not read of hundreds of other instances of Jews worshipping God, not at some appointed place, but where they chose, and without restraint.

But, at the same time that the Church in this period enjoyed the full privilege of worshipping God when and where they chose—privately, socially, in families, or congregations; and that their religion required this, it is also true—as the same thing is true now—that generally, if not always, they had extraordinary times and places for more general convocation. There were common, uncommon, occasional, and annual seasons of worship; but this is *peculiar* to no period of the Church, and to no country. Worship was not *confined* to "some appointed place," or to "stated seasons." There is nothing that I know of from which we have a right to presume that out-door preaching was objected to by even the mistaken zealots in the times of the prophets, of John the Baptist, or of Christ.

Indeed, I know of nothing that could be conceived and written more openly at war with historic truth than these "peculiarities" of Dr. Coleman. They originate wholly in the fancy and imagination of mistaken theologians. But so wide-spread is this general error of the broad "*dis-*

inction” and “*contrast*” between “Jewish religion” and “Christian religion,” that preachers and people, by the thousands, read such perversions of truth and theology as I have here quoted from Dr. Coleman, and think it is all right! The elder teach it to the younger, and the preachers teach it to the people!

May be I appear too dogmatical just here. I am aware my expressions are strong and positive; but how could they be otherwise?

CHAPTER XLV.

WAS REVEALED RELIGION EVER RESTRICTED TO ANY PARTICULAR PEOPLE?

WHETHER religion, before the time of Christ, was or was not confined, by divine law, to *the Jews*, depends entirely upon what is meant by "the Jews." If by *Jews* you mean strictly the lineal descendants of Abraham, through Jacob, it is not by any means true that religion was ever confined, or attempted to be confined, to them in any way, either generally or particularly. But if by *Jews* you mean the common name given to the Church, then it is a simple truism that religion was confined to religious people. Before the time of Christ, the Church—religious people—were called by the general name of Jews. And so before the time of Christ, religion was confined to the Church, as it is now.

There are plain, philosophic reasons why the peculiar course of Providence was pursued toward a single family; for their partial social exclusion from others for a long time; for the bondage in Egypt; the deliverance, etc. But there never were any reasons why religion should be confined to such nation; and in fact, it never was. The policy was, to instruct a particular people, by an extraordinary providence, in the doctrines and precepts of religion; but certainly not to prevent others from coming among them and receiving instruction too, and being religious likewise.

The entire plan of the calling of Abraham, the special revelations made to his descendants, together with all that is commonly called the Jewish economy—all, from first to last, was certainly not by any means intended to *confine* the true religion to these particular people and their lineal posterity; but on the contrary, the design of the whole most assuredly was, to *extend* religion throughout mankind as early, and as far, and wide as possible. Surely God has never restricted the spread of religion. The Jewish people were raised up to become the instruments of *spreading* religion over the wide earth.

The doors of the Church were always open wide, and on every side, and everybody, without restriction, let, or hindrance, was invited to come in and be religious too. It was not only the privilege, but the bounden duty, of all men to come into the Church and be religious; and if in the days of Moses, or the prophets, or any other days, any persons—many or few—declined or refused to come in with the people of God, and themselves become people of God, it was perverse disobedience for which, and for which alone, men are punished.

If the people of any age of the world—this present, or any former age—had done right, had obeyed God, had conformed to his will, according to the light they had, they would have become religious, the Church would thus have been extended over them, and they would thus have become *Jews, Christians, proselytes, pious or religious people*, with whatever adventitious or denominational designation you may choose to give them. By obeying God, they became God's people.

The address of Moses to Hobab, the Midianite—Num. x. 29, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel"—is a standing, implied proclamation of the Almighty, speaking from within

the Church, and addressed to all the world, and is alike applicable to all people, all times, all places, and all circumstances.

In the earlier history of the Israelitish Church, there were prudential reasons why the power of the Church should be concentrated and directed inward mostly, so as to operate chiefly upon its own focal center. This was necessary at this early period, in order to spiritualize and intensify itself, that it might be prepared to put on a more aggressive character in the future; but there never could be a time when it would be either prudent or proper to cease the natural and universal invitation of religion—"Come and go with us."

And as these early reasons for a partial non-aggressive character of the Church ceased to exist gradually, the Church became more and more liberal; its evangelical labors were directed more and more outward in a missionary direction; and at the time of the apostles, the Church took on far more of an aggressive character than it had previously possessed. But it has not to this day brought itself fully up to the high missionary and aggressive ground it is destined to occupy.

And so we find the historic facts to be, from Abraham to the present, that the Church has never ceased to cry, "Ho! every one that thirsteth." And in response to this voice of reason and invitation, the influx from without has been at least considerable, in every age and country, from Moses to this day.

Josephus—who was a Jew—tells us that the temple, as a place of worship, "ought to be common to all men, because God is the common God of all men."

And moreover, as a matter of historic fact, the Church, as far back as we are able to trace it, did always invite all men into it.

The teaching, then, we so frequently meet with, that the "Jewish religion" was confined to a particular people, and that the "Christian religion" differed from, and was superior to it, in that it offered salvation to all men, is a myth, a scholastic fancy, without either reason, probability, or historic truth to support it. Religion was always confined to religious people—to those who associated religiously for religious advancement; and so to the Church. And so it was confined to the Jews—if you call the Church by that name—or to the Christian Church, if you call it by this.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE ESSENTIAL SAMENESS OF THE CHURCH AND OF RELIGION, NOTWITHSTANDING THE VARIETY IN THE MODES OF WORSHIP IN DIFFERENT TIMES AND PLACES.

MR. R. WATSON—Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Christianity—says: "The Christian religion was published by its great Author, in Judea, a short time before the death of Herod." And again: "Although Christianity originated in Judea, it was not long confined within the narrow limits of the Holy Land."

No, sir; that is not the proper understanding of it. This is the fact, as Mr. Watson himself will not deny:

The Christian religion—that is, *the religion* now called by the name of "Christianity"—was published by its great Author, to all mankind, in the days of Adam, several thousand years before Herod was born. Christianity did not "originate in Judea;" it originated in or near the garden of Eden; and about fifteen years after the beginning of the great spiritual and numerical enlargement of the Church under the ministry of the apostles, the Church first took the *name* of "Christian," not in Judea, however, but away beyond the borders of Palestine, in Antioch, the capital city of Syria, in the north of that country.

Mr. Watson does injustice to himself, for he himself will not object to the following very true remarks from Mr.

Burkitt, in his Notes on Acts xviii. 26: "Observe the antiquity of the gospel, or the doctrine of reconciliation by Jesus Christ; it was preached to the patriarchs, and to the prophets, to the ancient Israelites. . . . There is but one way to salvation, namely, reconciliation with God through the blood of Christ; and this was declared to the children of Israel as well as unto us."

Mr. Watson himself very truly says, that "the Christian Church is not *another* Church, but the *very same* that was before the coming of Christ." Then the religion must be the same, of course.

And also in many, many places—so numerous and so notorious that they need not be quoted—Mr. Watson attributes to Abel and to all the "Old Testament saints," as he calls those eminently pious thousands and millions of those ages, the very same religious faith, in theory and practice, which he finds in Paul and in all the New Testament saints. They were saved—so Mr. Watson teaches—not by works which they did, only in the sense that all Christians must do works meet for repentance, but in pursuance of the faith which they had in the atoning merits of Jesus Christ.

What do we mean by *same*, and what by *different*, as we apply these ideas in describing religion, or the Church?

There are several senses in which *sameness* cannot be predicated of any one thing at different times, or as it may be viewed in different aspects. A man is not, in all senses, the *same* to-day he was yesterday. He is not the same in age, in experience, in health, in learning, in piety, in bodily weight, etc. We say, however, that the *man* is the same. Just so of the Church in different places, and at different times. But this is only saying that both men and the Church present, at different times, a variety in condition and circumstances.

Go to the different portions of the Church to-day, and

you will find in one place a camp-meeting, in another a chaplaincy to Congress, or in the army; in another a congregational meeting on Sunday morning, here a synod, there a class-meeting, an ecclesiastical court, or a Sunday-school; here you will find a bishop performing high mass, and there a "confirmation" declared to be necessary to Church-membership: these will tell you that nothing short of immersion in water will suffice for baptism; while those use only a basin of water. And so, as every one will see at once, the variety is endless, in a hundred different things. And then if you go back only a hundred or five hundred years, you find other varieties, and in other periods, others, etc. And yet, all this is the *same* Church. Some of it, no doubt, is error and superstition. Sometimes you see the Protestants urged on by Luther; sometimes the king-Church of Henry VIII.; and again, Pope Alexander treading on the neck of Emperor Frederick. Farther back you see Paul preaching at Athens; and again, as much deluded as many others have been before and since, going with letters to Damascus, to regulate Church matters away up there; and farther back you find the Saviour himself preaching to the multitudes, sometimes in the churches, and sometimes on the hillside; and so you find John the Baptist, and Zechariah, and Malachi, and Isaiah, and Moses, and Noah, and Abel.

And as nearly as human language can define an idea, it is all *Church*. Much of the things done, were awkwardly done; much was the result of ignorance and misreading of the Scriptures; and much was positively injurious to religion. If any man shall say that these "Jews," or those other worshipers were not a Church, because some of them were mistaken in this, that, and the other thing, then I reply that he proves too much, for he proves that there has never been a Church. These are not to be counted *out*, because they lived in the wrong age of the world; nor are

those to be counted *in*, because they lived in the right age; neither are these to be *excluded* because they were called "Jews," nor are those to be *included* because they were called "Christians," either at "Antioch" or anywhere else. "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Some of these Church varieties are highly necessary. To avoid them would be to have a world that would need no Church. There were circumstances connected with the Church before the flood, which could not have obtained at a later period; and there are those in the life and times of Noah, and in the Abrahamic period, in the time of the bondage, in the journey in the wilderness, and in the time of the kings, which were necessarily peculiar to those periods.

In all these states of the Church there was the greatest conceivable variety in external manners, in many things, some of which are noted in the very brief sketches of history we have; but, with rare exceptions, they are lost to us.

And then, in the great and glorious appearing of the Son of God himself, in human form, so long prophesied of, anticipated, looked forward to, it is easy to see that many things pertaining to the externals of worship before, could not possibly attach now.

But still, from the days of the first promise, there have been one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one plan of salvation, one Saviour, and one heaven.

I insist that the Church, before the days of Christ's humanity, was not the mechanical, artificial thing it seems to be regarded by many. The world, and the people in it, were constitutionally the same then as now; it was a *natural* world, and the people were natural people; there was no more of an ecclesiastical *machine* then than now; men were

individual men, acting with motives and prejudices, and sound judgment, with good and bad feelings, and presenting all the natural varieties of life which we see now. From many writers you would suppose that the Church, for fifteen hundred years before the coming of Christ, was always exactly the same, that every man acted and thought exactly so and so, according to some Scripture remark having particular application. But this could not be. If the people were natural people, they presented all the variety of aspect, and of external form and manners in religion, as in every thing else, in different countries, and in different ages, in that period of the world, as well as in this.

But still, consistent with all this external variety, the grand central doctrines of religion remained firm in those days, as in these; and so, also, the *association* of religious persons—which is the true, and only true, idea of *Church*—must have been substantially the same.

And then it might be inquired, In what does consist the *sameness* of the Church? What makes it the same?

The answer is, that sameness in *religion* necessarily insures sameness in the *Church*, because the Church is the religious ASSOCIATION of religious persons. Those who believe in the Koran, or any other form of idolatry, or Jews who reject Christ, or any other persons who do not receive the Scriptures as revelation, could not by possibility *associate* in worship, for religious enlargement, with those who do thus believe.

It must be remembered that revelation is not only believed to be the true religion, for that might be said of the Mormon religion; but this argument assumes that it is the true religion; hence the social and spiritual effect it produces; and hence the sameness of the Church.

And not only so, but the Christian of to-day brings his religion all along down through the Old Testament facts

and principles; he brings the Christ of prophecy and Jesus of Nazareth right together, and unites them in one atoning, bleeding, mediating Saviour.

If Daniel had lived long enough, and maintained his faith, he would have embraced Jesus Christ face to face; and then if he had lived still longer, he would have looked *back* on his life and death, and would have commemorated his sacrificial atonement. But, living as he did, on only one chronological side of Christ, he could only look upon him in worship, in prospect.

Religion must be historical, because the world is chronological; and the Christian, therefore—so called—whose religion does not run back through the entire Old Testament, embracing every one of its principles, is not a Christian; his religion is not known to divine revelation. Christ—the only Christ known to religion—was slain from the foundation of the world; he did not originate—begin to be the Saviour in the days of the apostles, nor “in Judea,” as Mr. Watson says. The Christology of religion pertained as much to the days of Moses as to those of Paul; the religion of Old and New Testament saints pertains equally and alike to both periods, though their lives do not.

And so we speak of two men as having the same religion, whether they lived both before Christ, or one before and one after, or both after.

And yet, Dr. Doddridge tells us, Par. Rom. ii. 25, that “the being a Jew, if he be truly a good man, will give him many advantages for becoming a Christian.”

That is to say, a man whose religion embraces every doctrine and precept revealed in the Bible, and who practices them daily, possesses *many advantages* thereby “for *becoming* a Christian!” A truly good man, who receives in heart, life, and daily experience, the entire revealed religion, has still to *become* a Christian! And that passes for theology!

CHAPTER XLVII.

A VIEW OF THE RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE SAME INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN MEN WHO LIVED IN PALESTINE, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

THERE were in the Church many persons of full age, at the birth of Christ, who lived twenty or thirty years into the *Christian* Church, as it is called. Let us notice the life and experience of one of these men.

He was a Jew, and was both religious and pious. He understood the Scriptures as they were, and not as they were misunderstood by many. His religion was true Judaism, according to all the definitions and understanding. Then he expected the Messiah, and could but carry about him a heart throbbing with expectation that he might himself, with his own eyes, see the long, long looked-for Emmanuel. He hears the preaching of John the Baptist, and may have had some knowledge of the early life of Jesus. Many had strong faith in his Messiahship from his infancy. He now hears the Saviour preach, and sees the miracles which he did. Maybe he was one of the twelve, or one of the seventy. He believed in him. Like the best of the apostles, his faith may have wavered at the crucifixion, but the resurrection set him right. He believed, and believing, rejoiced in him.

He saw, it is true, many of his brethren who would not

believe; who turned away and said, Away with him. And he saw others who wavered in their faith still, but he remained steadfast. Belief in Christ was comfort to his soul. And so he grew in grace as he grew in years. He heard Paul preach, and believed him, and sorrowed over the unbelief of his brethren. He heard of Peter's preaching to Cornelius, and saw the Gentiles coming into the Church much more numerous than of old, when he was a young man, and previously. He heard Peter's explanation, and said, "Now I understand things better than I did." Now this man is eighty years old, and the apostles and their brethren have been preaching twenty-five or thirty years.

Now, who will say that this man has changed his religion? And who will say he is not a Christian?

And, I ask, how would he have understood such language from St. Paul, as Dr. Doddridge puts into the mouth of that apostle, in his Paraphrase of Rom. ii. 25—"Your being a Jew, and a good man, has given you many advantages for becoming a Christian"? The question would naturally arise in his mind, When did he *become* a Christian? He was converted to the faith of the Scriptures, in the true sense of evangelical conversion, when he was eighteen or twenty years old, before Jesus was born. He *then became a Christian*, if he ever did, and he has remained firm in the faith. He was a Christian at the age of fifteen or twenty, in the same sense he is now; and he is certainly now a Christian, in the highest evangelical sense.

And this, I presume, is the only kind of Christianity which the apostles had. Paul was converted at a later period. Of the time of the conversion of the other apostles, we are not particularly informed.

I ask Dr. Doddridge if divine grace can convert a man *from* the faith of the Scriptures, and the religion taught there, *to* some other faith found also in the Scriptures?

The case of this man was the case of thousands, and *ought to have been* the case with every man and woman in the Church, and in the world, at that time; yea, and at every other time.

How well this man understood the *theology* of Christ's work and office, in all points, is another question. I understand that every Christian man improves, or ought to improve, in his knowledge of the ways of God to man as he grows older. But this improvement in theological knowledge does not imply a *change in religion*; or, if so, then every Christian changes his religion every day.

This man died at the age of eighty years, firm in the faith of the Church, which was taught him by his parents and by the preachers, in the days of his boyhood and of his youth. His was true Judaism—not the mistaken views of religion entertained by many of his brethren. He understands well that his Church, which was formerly called Jewish, is now called Christian; but this he well knows is a mere change in the *name* of the same *thing*.

It was unfortunately the case in those days that there was great lack of piety as well as sound theological knowledge in the Church, and especially among the ruling officials. The piety was among the masses, with some exceptions. Many of the priests and other preachers were pious, but the Sanhedrim was mainly corrupt.

Now, I summon those pious men and women—hundreds, thousands, or most probably hundreds of thousands, as the case may have been—who were soundly converted to God before Jesus was born, or before he entered upon his ministry, and who continued to live and to enjoy religion uninterruptedly away twenty or thirty years or more, into what is called the apostolic Church, and I ask them when they *became Christians*, according to the theology of Doddridge, Dick, Watson, and others. They will tell you that that is

something they know nothing about. At their earliest recollection they received religious instruction from their parents, from ministers, and other pious persons. In humble submission to those teachings, they were converted in their youth to an experimental knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ—though Messiah was then in prospect, and they merely continued in the same faith, and in the same Church, enjoying the same religion. Some of them heard John preach, and were convinced that the time of Christ was then present. Some of them saw Christ personally, and heard him preach; and they all searched the Scriptures and found that these things were so. They neither saw nor heard of any change in religion, or in Church-relationship; nor did the necessity or propriety of any such changes ever occur to them. They found themselves in Church-fellowship with Paul, and Cornelius, and thousands of others, because they were converted, either in the Church or out of it, and then came in. I ask them if Paul was not a Church-member from youth; and they reply, "Ah, yes, he was nominally a member of the Church, but like many others, he was a wicked, unconverted man, until the power of truth overtook him on his way to Damascus." I ask them why they have ceased to circumcise their children; and they reply, "*Because Christ has come.*"

In regard to the sacraments, they explain, that the mode of solemnizing them before the death of Christ was rational, intelligible, and very full of comfort. It pointed forward to some future period, when the Christ of Scripture would appear; but when this appearance takes place, this form must needs discontinue. But in what way the sacraments would be administered after this, they did not know. They saw, however, that before Christ closed his visible work, he prescribed the manner in which this would be done in all future time. These new modes of performing the sacraments,

they accept as of divine direction from the Saviour; while at the same time they see in them great significancy and naturalness. As to the sacraments themselves, they remain the same they always were.

And so they saw no changes either in religion, or Church-usage, or Church-polity, except such as the mere *coming* of the Saviour makes necessary. These changes in the external modes of performing some of the rites of religion, are rendered naturally necessary, in order that the Church may *continue the same*, and religion be unchanged.

They therefore show you, in the most natural and reasonable way conceivable, how the religion of all the pious men in the Church remained firm and unchanged through the entire period of the Saviour's ministry and death, and on for twenty or forty years into the Church afterward. And if they were to hear these modern theologians talking about the new Church—the new religion—the primitive Church—the origin of Christianity—the religion and Church which the Saviour set up—of a Christianity differing essentially from the Church and religion before Christ was born, they would tell you that nothing of that sort happened—that they never heard of any such things.

And if you could see the twelve apostles themselves, and ask them about that terrible conflict they had, when they alone, with perhaps Simeon and Anna, and three or four others, had to contend against the whole Jewish people, and the world beside, in “setting up” Christianity, in persuading the Jews to “renounce their religion,” and in “modeling their Church after the synagogue,” they would tell you that these are things they never heard of before. It is a mistake—no such things happened. And if you were to show them such books as Neander's and Fleetwood's *Lives of Christ*, and Conybeare and Howson's, Coleman's, Schaff's, and many other *Lives of the Apostles*, they would say they were works

of fiction, interspersed with some biblical truth; but as to the Church and its religion, they were historic of little or nothing that occurred in their days. And St. Paul would wonder why such "false brethren" should so continue to misrepresent him.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CONCERNING THE GREAT JEWISH APOSTASY.

THERE is a wide-spread impression in the Church that the Jews of modern times continue to hold the same religion which the Jews held anterior to the coming of Christ; that Jews are Jews, and the Jewish religion is the Jewish religion, one and the same, before and after the coming of Christ.

This doctrine is taught, either in express terms, or by plain implication, by many of our best authors. Dr. Doddridge places the Jews, before and after Christ, in the same category, both in their religion and lineal descent. They are the successors genealogically, and continue the same religion. Speaking of modern Jews, Par. p. 282, Mark xiii. 20, he says: "For he (God) hath still purposes of love toward the seed of Abraham, which shall at length take place; and in the meantime, he will make their continuing a distinct people the means of confirming the faith of Christians in succeeding ages." And in a foot-note he refers to other writings of his own, and to other authors, wherein "*their continuing* a distinct people" is farther illustrated.

And in other places he clearly assumes that the ancient descendants of Jacob have been wonderfully preserved in a national distinctness to the present time. As a people lineally descended, and holding the same religion, they are

identical with the people now existing and known as Jews.

The Religious Encyclopedia, Article Jews, p. 691, holds the same doctrine. It clearly places the Jews before Christ and modern Jews in the same category, in respect both of religion and natural descent. Speaking of modern Jews, the writer says: "Their firm adherence to their religion," (meaning the religion of Jews before Christ,) "and being dispersed all over the earth, has furnished every age and every nation with the strongest arguments for the Christian faith."

Thus it is distinctly affirmed that modern Jews *maintain a firm adherence to their religion*—meaning the religion of the ancient Jewish Church.

And again it is said, p. 692: "The modern Jews still adhere as closely to the Mosaic dispensation as their dispersed and despised condition will permit them." By *dispensation* I presume he means *religion*, for I cannot see how anybody can adhere to a dispensation.

The language of the *Encyclopedia* on this point is evidently copied from the *Spectator*, No. 495, except the word "dispensation." Such a classic writer would hardly be guilty of such a blunder. But Mr. Addison has fallen into the same error in regard to the identity of the religion of the ancient and modern Jews.

He says: "Their firm adherence to their religion is no less remarkable than their number and dispersion, especially considering it as persecuted and contemned over the face of the whole earth. This is likewise the more remarkable if we consider the frequent apostasies of this people, when they lived under their kings, in the land of promise, and within sight of the temple."

The error I allude to is here, in the language of Mr. Addison, particularly conspicuous and palpable. Alluding

to the frequent apostasies of the Jews in the days of the kings, he said it is the more remarkable that ever since they should *maintain their firm adherence to their religion*—their ancient religion. Jews before, and Jews after Christ, are here placed in the same category, particularly in respect to religion. The reader will please to keep his eye upon this point.

Buck's Theological Dictionary, Article Jews, holds the same doctrine as found in the *Spectator*, being evidently copied from it.

Mr. Watson, Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Jews—Modern—holds the same doctrine, making no distinction in the religion of ancient Jews before Christ and the people he calls modern Jews; but he describes and leaves them in the same category. And in Article Judaism, he says: "Their religious worship and character in our Saviour's time had become formal and superstitious, and such it still continues to be, in a greater or less degree, at the present day." Thus supposing the worship and religion of ancient and modern Jews to be one and the same thing.

Quotations to this effect, and from various authors, could be multiplied to almost any extent. Indeed, so common have been these teachings, that the prevalent impression is, that the Jews of modern times profess the same religion as the Jews before the Christian era.

With this notion I join issue directly, and have no doubt of being able to show conclusively that no two religions ever were more hostile to each other than that of the people called Jews, before Christ, and that of the people called Jews, after Christ. *I hold that the people known as Jews since the time of Christ, APOSTATIZED, not partially, but wholly, from the religion they formerly professed, and that they set up a religion not before known, but in the highest and open-*

est hostility with their former faith, and that it is this *new* religion which “continues at the present day,” and not the Jewish religion, as Mr. Watson affirms.

That there were individual persons in the Church in that day who greatly misunderstood their religion, or who had confused views in regard to it, and were thereby likely to fall into gross and fatal errors, is readily admitted. As much may be said of this or any other period of the Church. Here there are no questions in issue.

It will not, I presume, be denied by any that—

First. It was a doctrine of the Jewish Church, from the days of Moses at least, that the Saviour would appear among them in the form of man, and that a belief in this prospective, looked-for Saviour was essential to salvation. I do not mean that it was essential to salvation that any person in those days should have had the clear views of the Saviour which many Christians have in these. That is not the case now. But I mean that the Christ, the Saviour, the object of religious belief, was then a cardinal, vital doctrine of the revealed religion. And in a more or less confused or clear manner, it was the ground, and only ground, of religious faith; that their written religion offered salvation to all men upon the condition of belief in a coming Saviour, and denied it absolutely on any other conditions.

Secondly. It follows then, necessarily, that their written and well-understood religion required that whenever the Saviour should come, that he be received heartily and gladly, and believed in as such.

Thirdly. The Scriptures did not teach, as the history of religion proved, merely hypothetically, in regard to some indefinite Saviour, leaving the doctrine of a Saviour at loose ends, for every man to think as he might fancy in regard to his personality; but they taught specifically and exactly in regard to the identical Son of Mary who did

come. If this identity was not *known* before, it was nevertheless *true*, and was known afterward.

Fourthly. The Christ of the Jewish religion *did come* in conformity with the Scriptures, and according to their predictions and the faith of the Church. And after sufficient debate and consultation, some of the Jews—not all, but whatever may have been the proportion—a great many of these same Jews deliberately and finally rejected him, insisting that he was not the Saviour.

Now we have, unquestionably, two sorts of Jews, divided upon a question of the most vital importance to religion; and we proceed to inquire into the religious *status* of the two parties respectively, the Old Testament Scriptures being the base-line of our inquiry.

And it is apparent and beyond question, that the *receiving or believing* Jews remained firm in the faith of their Scriptures. They then believed as they always believed, supposing them to have understood their own religion. They received the Christ in whom they always believed. He was their Christ before; he is theirs now. That which in the nature of things was prospective before, is realized now.

And as to the *rejecting* Jews, why they *denied* Christ. That placed them in the same relation to religion—the religion of the Scriptures—as the same act would place anybody else at any other time. Suppose one man, a professor of religion, or a thousand, or a million, were to reject and deny Christ, deliberately and finally, now? You would say it was *apostasy*. You would not admit that it was backsliding. Every one would say it was apostasy outright.

There is no religion known to revelation that is not based wholly and entirely on Jesus Christ, as he is presented both in the Old and New Testaments.

These rejecting Jews, then, are apostates. They apostate

tized wholly; they repudiated not a part, but the whole of their religion; and if they have any religion since, it is wholly new, and wholly false. If they still continue to use some of the *names* which have a verbal connection with religion, that makes no difference. There is no religion in the *name* of Moses or Abraham, any more than there is upon some spot of ground upon which they once stood, or some other incident, or all the incidents of their personal history. There is no religion known to revelation but *belief in Christ*.

If you take Christ wholly out of the Old Testament, what have you left? You have some history, and some biography, and some other merely verbal things, and some manipulations which were externally used in worship; but you have left in them nothing, absolutely nothing, which makes up true religion.

Now these apostate Jews exclude Christ wholly from the Old Testament; so they exclude all the true religion of the Church which was held previous to that time. To look, or profess to look, for some other Christ than the Messiah of Scripture, is to look for no Christ. You might as well predicate Christianity of Mormonism or Mohammedanism. They have their Christs. Will any man deny the essential Christology of the Old Testament? And will any man say there is any religion of the Old Testament not resting wholly and exclusively on Jesus Christ, the veritable, identical Son of Mary?

These apostate Jews might continue to assemble in houses on the Sabbath, and call their meetings worship. An infidel club in the city of Boston does the same thing. There can be no worship where Christ is excluded.

The particular time at which this apostasy took place can make no difference as to its character. If it had occurred one hundred or one thousand years before it did, or one

hundred or one thousand years later, it would have been the same. Apostasy is the repudiation of one's former religion—the renunciation of its essential faith.

These Jews, then, having renounced every thing that was vital in their former religion, *apostatized wholly*, square out, fully, completely. They possessed afterward no more of the Jewish faith than Mormons do of the same faith; they retained nothing in their religion of their former faith. If they continue to circumcise their children, it is no more Jewish circumcision than the infliction of any other kind of wound; *for their religion required circumcision to abate on the coming of the Messiah, to which that rite looked forward*; and you cannot look *forward* to that which is *past*. Moreover, it had essential and vital relation to Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, the Logos of God. Surely the mere external act of a little blood-letting had no religion in it, either true or false. The only scriptural virtue or character that circumcision ever had in it, was found in its sacramental connection, not with some indefinite or supposed Christ, but with the true Christ of Scripture.

This particular point—the absolute requirement of the Old Testament to discontinue circumcision and all other forereaching rites on the coming of Messiah—will be farther elaborated and illustrated in future chapters.

The simple truth is, that soon after the death of Christ, a very large portion of the Church renounced their former faith, apostatized, and set up a new religion not before known. Thus probably one-half, or at least a great many of the Church, *left the Church* and went away from it. The false religion thus set up was DEISM, and their descendants remain in the practice of this peculiar form of deism to this day.

It is true, however, that these deists, having such an intimate historic connection with Jews, and perhaps farther,

because the Jews took the more appropriate name of Christians, retained, by common consent, the name of Jews. But if they were to call themselves by the name of Seraphim, they would still be apostates from the Jewish faith.

I hold, therefore, that these men greatly mistake, whoever they may be, and however many there may be, who teach that modern Jews profess the religion of their ante-Messianic fathers. The two religions are not only different, but are in the highest degree hostile to each other. The former is essentially infidel—the latter was essentially Christian.

The Jews who renounced Christ and turned away from him—having previously professed him—are *apostate deists*, and they and their descendants have “*continued*” that new form of infidelity to this day. Those who received Christ in pursuance of their faith, or, as it is said, “according to the Scriptures,” and maintained their position, together with many Gentiles who afterward came in and joined them, formed the great apostolic Church, as the Church in that day is generally called, and *they* “*continued*” the ancient religion, and they only maintain it to this day.

This GREAT APOSTASY—the greatest by far, considered in every respect, the history of religion ever knew—an apostasy which has called forth the visible curse of the Almighty in a most wonderful manner—has not, so far as I have seen, been even noticed by the leading theological writers.

And I hold it as matter of marvel that Mr. Addison, as well as many others, should speak particularly of “the apostasies” of this people, with not the remotest allusion to not only the greatest, highest, and most important apostasy marking Jewish history, but the greatest and most important apostasy known to any history. And I hold it a marvel that Mr. Watson should be guilty of the same oversight, and even by fair implication expressly to ignore it. A half a dozen now before me, copy Watson; and among all the

authors around me, I see nothing on the subject but a mere copying from one to another.

I may be charged with arrogance or severity. I will not stop to debate questions of this sort. I am, however, not unnecessarily severe, nor do I desire to be dogmatic. I profess only to unfold the truth, and make it palpable to all, in regard to this important Christian doctrine.

As to the "continued" oneness of the Jewish people in respect to lineal descent from a common ancestor, that is also an error as palpable as an error can be, for it contradicts the well-known and unquestioned Bible histories in the case. But that argument does not belong to this chapter.

There are, therefore, no such "arguments for the Christian faith" as the compiler of the *Religious Encyclopedia* and many other writers think they have found in the adherence of modern Jews to the ancient Jewish faith; for the supposed "adherence" is a myth, a mistake, with no support in matter of fact. I appeal to the Scriptures, and to the unquestioned history of the case.

CHAPTER XLIX.

CONCERNING THE GREAT MESSIANIC QUESTION, AND THE
PARTIES TO IT.

No intelligent Jew of the present day would advance an objection to the argument of the last chapter on the Jewish apostasy, on logical grounds. He would readily admit that, supposing Jesus to be the Christ of Jewish prophecy; then the argument, as I have stated it, follows of logical necessity. He would oppose the charge of apostasy only on the question of fact, and contend that Jesus was not the Christ of the Old Testament. The modern Jew stands upon ground which is logically true. The whole question turns upon the simple issue of fact.

He contends that the ancient Jewish faith had no reference whatever to Jesus of Nazareth, but to another Christ still in the future; and he contends for the truth of his present religion only on that hypothesis.

The identical Jesus, the Son of Mary was, or was not, the Messiah of Hebrew prophecy; he was THE ONE that should come, the Shiloh of the universal Jewish faith, the embodiment of the Old Testament religion, or he was not. And if not, then it follows necessarily that the *believing* Jews apostatized, and that Christianity is idolatry. Either the one or the other must be true. The question between Christians and modern Jews is one involving this simple fact.

The rejecting Jews contended that they did not reject the Messiah. They rejected Jesus on the ground that he was an impostor; and if that were true, then they are right, and Christians are wrong. The true answer to the question, Is Jesus the Christ? determines which party maintained the previous faith of the Church, and which apostatized from it.

Dr. Neander—*Life of Christ*, p. 57—in speaking of John the Baptist, says: "We must conclude, however, that if John did recognize Jesus as Messiah, he applied to him all his Old Testament ideas of Messiah, as the founder of a visible kingdom."

I marvel at such a statement, and still farther, that it passes current in the Church. I beg the Doctor's pardon, while I hold that there is not such an "*idea*" of Christ in the Old Testament. Every idea of Christ in the Old Testament is exactly the same as in the New Testament. Will any man say that the Old Testament teaches of the Messiah *as the founder of a visible kingdom?*

Let the Old Testament vindicate itself from such theology, and show what its *ideas* of Messiah are:

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;

and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa. liii.

These are the "Old Testament ideas of Messiah." They may be read in a hundred other places.

But I suggest, as a necessary logical conclusion, that if the Old Testament represents the Messiah *as the founder of a visible kingdom*, and the New Testament represents him as the ruler of a kingdom *not of this world*, then the one or the other is wrong; and I ask the learned Doctor which is revelation, and which is erroneous human teaching?

This is the very ground upon which Jewish deism is built.

This doctrine, which, I am sorry to say, is not confined to Dr. Neander, is either true or false. If true, then *our* Saviour is not the Christ of the Old Testament Scriptures, but is a person who about eighteen hundred years ago set

up a new religion in opposition to that of the Scriptures; and upon this hypothesis the rejecting Jews did right—they maintained their faith, and do so still! I ask the Doctor if that is true?

And then, the difficulty with us Christians is, that we have not any system of religion, good or bad. For it is historically true, right or wrong, and I present the broad face of the New Testament to prove it—nay, I have herein before proved it abundantly—that Jesus Christ, and his apostles and evangelists, did not teach *anew any* religious doctrines whatsoever. They retaught, illustrated, enforced, made plain, interpreted, expounded, elucidated, and commented upon the then existing Scriptures; this they did, and beyond this they did not do.

“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written IN THE LAW OF MOSES, AND IN THE PROPHETS, AND IN THE PSALMS concerning me.” Luke xxiv. 44.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Matt. v. 17.

“The sower soweth THE WORD.” Matt. iv. 14.

“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.” John v. 46.

“For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing BY THE SCRIPTURES that Jesus was Christ.” Acts xviii. 28.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing THE WORD OF TRUTH.” 2 Tim. ii. 15.

“Then opened he their understanding, THAT THEY MIGHT UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES.” Luke xxiv. 45.

And more than one hundred other texts might be quoted,

going to show that all the teachings of Christ and the apostles, with those of John the Baptist before them, were based on the Old Testament doctrines.

Then we Christians have the Old Testament doctrines of religion, without addition, for our religion; or we have no doctrines of religion, either good or bad; for Christ is represented as the *Founder* of the same sort of a *kingdom* in both.

The very grounds on which the apostatizing Jews, eighteen hundred years ago, repudiated Christ were, that he did not set up "a visible kingdom." They *said* that in so doing they were following the Scriptures; but the *falsity* of this saying is the pedestal, and the only pedestal, upon which the Church has rested since that day. Dr. Neander's statement above is a flat denial of the truth of Christianity. Strange that the Doctor did not see it! By unavoidable inference he admits that those Jews conformed to the Scriptures in rejecting Christ.

If this doctrine of a visible-kingdom-Messiah in the Old Testament, and a spiritual-kingdom-Messiah for the New; or, one religion for Jews, and another for Christians—which is here plainly taught by Neander—be the true doctrine, then I see not why any blame is to be set up against the rejecting Jews for refusing Christ. The religion they professed was written, and supposing them to have understood it, why should they not conform to it? It was asking of them too much, that they should turn away from the religion Jehovah had taught them, and which their prophets had written.

This they were *not* required to do. They were required to conform to, not turn from, the teachings of the Old Testament. Those who rejected Christ rejected the Old Testament; and those who received him, did so in strict conformity with those teachings.

CHAPTER L.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST—WHAT IS IT, AND
WHEN DID IT BEGIN TO EXIST?

NEANDER, in his *Life of Christ*, page 81, says: "The object of Christ was, as he himself often describes it, to establish the kingdom of God among men."

This is undoubtedly true, just as it is written. But any one to look at the connection in which this passage stands, will see at once that the term *establish* is used not in the sense of to *settle permanently*, to *fix firmly*, to *ratify*, to *confirm*, but in the sense of to *found*, to *set up anew*, to *originate*. The two things are widely different. It is true that Christ came to settle permanently—to fix firmly—to ratify and confirm unalterably in the hearts of men the religion of the Scriptures, which is very properly and significantly called the kingdom of God. This religion supposes that Christ would *reign* permanently and supremely in the hearts of those receiving it. The figure is striking, apt, and descriptive.

But it is not true that Christ came to *found* a kingdom—to originate a religion—to set up a new system of doctrines.

The Doctor, however, does not teach that this kingdom of God was, under Christ, *wholly* and *in every respect* original and independent. For he says, "We must therefore look back upon the Old Testament foundations of the kingdom

of God, before we can correctly understand the plan of Christ, as set forth in his acts and words. The one prepared the way for the other. In the former it was outward, and confined to the narrow community of the Jewish people."

Here the contrast is drawn between the "Old Testament foundations of the kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of God among men," which Christ came to set up. This distinction is, that the former was *outward*, and *confined to the Jews*, and the latter was to be "universal" and "all-embracing."

I am aware it has been often taught that the religion of the Old Testament was a mere *outward* religion. This is no more true of the Old Testament than of the New. In the first place, holiness of heart is plainly written in hundreds of forms of expression, all over the Scriptures, as being essential to salvation; and in the second place, it would be hard to presume that any men of these times, or indeed of any times, were pious *beyond* the teachings of the then existing Scriptures; and it is well known that no men ever lived who had a higher record for holiness than some of the Old Testament saints.

Neither was the Old Testament religion ever "confined" at all, in any sense, to any people, or any country, otherwise than as a simple truism, that religion was confined to religious people. If by Jews you mean religious people, then of course religion was confined to them; but if by Jews you mean any other or particular people, then it is not true that religion was ever confined to them. Religion was always free to all people.

Mr. Watson—Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Kingdom—says: "But his (Christ's) kingdom primarily imports the Gospel Church." What he intends to be meant by *the Gospel Church* is difficult to understand,

since in another place he tells us that "the Christian Church is not another Church, but the very same that was before the coming of Christ."

Doddridge frequently speaks of the kingdom of God as a new thing in Christ's time, which the Saviour came to set up originally. In Mark i. 38, he speaks of the preaching by Jesus of "the kingdom which God was about to erect;" and so, of course, it did not then exist.

Neander—*Life of Christ*, page 9—speaks with great plainness of the origin of the kingdom of God. "His (Christ's) life revealed the kingdom of God which was to be set up over all men; and it properly commenced in a nation whose political life, always developed in the theocratic form, was a continual type of that kingdom."

Dr. Clarke—Com. Matt. iii. 2—in a very roundabout way, teaches that the kingdom of heaven has its origin with the personal human preaching or work of Christ. "The reign of Christ among men is expressly foretold in Daniel vii. 13, 14."

This is a mistake. It was not the *reign* of Christ that Daniel foretold. That was never *foretold*, for it existed as certainly, though not so largely visible, in the days of Daniel as of Paul. It was the *visible and more palpable manifestation* to our senses and knowledge of the reign of Christ which the prophet foretold, and not the reign itself. Supposing the *regal authority* itself to be *foretold*, it follows that Christ was not invested with authority until the time of his human appearance. The Doctor would certainly not say that, for he abundantly teaches that the authority—the actual rule—the kingly reign of Christ existed fully from at least the time of the first promise. But he teaches in a way that has misled thousands.

And Benson falls into the same error. He says, in commenting on Matt. iii. 2—"God was about to appear in an

extraordinary manner to erect that kingdom spoken of by Daniel."

This cannot be true. Mr. Benson, as well as everybody else, contradicts it everywhere. God was not about to *erect* a kingdom. The coming of Christ was to *make plain to men—to manifest to us* the kingdom of God, long, long since in existence.

It is useless to argue about matters which lie out upon the very title-page of theology, and do not admit of difference of opinion among Christians. If divine religion had *no existence* among men before the coming of Christ, then Mr. Benson is right; otherwise he is wrong. If the Almighty had no government of the world on religious principles until since the appearance of Christ, then be it so; but if he had, then Mr. Benson has no right to deny it; and to clothe the error in a straight-laced ecclesiastical verbiage, deriving its currency from being oft repeated, rather than from being true, does not relieve the difficulty, in my judgment.

The kingdom of God—of Christ—of heaven, is a spiritual kingdom—an everlasting kingdom—is not of this world—cometh not with observation—was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets shall be seen in it—is not meat and drink, and was therefore not *set up*—did not *originate* eighteen hundred years ago.

CHAPTER LI.

EXPLANATORY OF THE MISSIONARY CHARACTER OF THE
CHURCH AFTER THE COMING OF CHRIST.

ONE of the greatest visible differences in the Church, in the period called Christianity, and that called Judaism, is, that in the former it is prominently *aggressive, outgoing, and missionary*, in its labors; whereas, in the latter, it was more *close, home-like, and exclusive*. Or, we might say, the two periods of the Church present religion somewhat in its *subjective* and its *objective* forms of practical labor and operation. And still, these two states of the Church, it ought to be seen, are rational, and not difficult to be understood and appreciated.

Before the appearance of Christ—as has been previously explained, at perhaps sufficient length—many of the external forms of worship were so arranged as to *point forward* in a teachable kind of way to the *coming* of Christ in his human form. And secondly, the outward labors of *the Church*—not of individual members—were conducted on *close, or subjective* principles. After Christ, those things which anticipated his coming abated, of course; and at this time the Church assumed a more *objective* mode of prosecuting the business of religion.

This may be illustrated by supposing two different Churches at the present day. There is an old-time, rigidly

Calvinistic Baptist Church; and there is a Methodist Church. They are both integral parts of the Church of God; their worship and ministry are mainly alike; the same Bible, same conditions of salvation, and same general modes of worship. In the former, almost every thing is done *in-doors*; the Church itself makes no outward efforts to bring sinners in from without; its adherents hold it to be the duty, however, of all men, to come into the Church and be religious, and are always ready to receive any such cordially and with good welcome; they preach to all who come to hear, but make no aggressive or missionary efforts to bring them in.

The Methodist Church, in the first place, does the same thing its sister Church does, and in addition, its adherents give to their labors a strong *aggressive* character. They say, too, that it is the duty of all men to come in; but as they do not come, they go out after them, and press the claims of Christ at their very homes. And so they establish Bible, tract, missionary, and Sunday-school societies in the Church, and raise money to support preaching and other Church-labors, not only within the pale of the Church, but in the regions beyond.

This is somewhat the difference between the character of the Church in the periods before and after Christ, with the exception of those modes of teaching the future coming of the Saviour in the outward acts of worship, as herein before explained. The two Churches are widely different, but different only in the outward Church-labors of religion.

The *reasons* for this difference in the outward labors of the Church, before and after the Advent, raises another question, which does not necessarily belong to this chapter. We may see these reasons but partially, though some of them are not beyond the sphere of our observations.

This outgoing, missionary, or aggressive feature given to

the labors of the ministry, has been by many mistaken for the institution of a new and different ministry. Indeed, I am hardly able to get definitely hold of the practical idea of a newly-instituted ministry at this or any other time, seeing there then existed a divinely-recognized ministry. The ministry might need additions to its membership; it might need much instruction; much of it, because of unbelief and perverseness, might be repudiated by Christ; but what is meant by a *new* and different *kind* of ministry?

The simple, practical truth is, that the Saviour gave large instructions to ministers, as it was needed; some of these instructions were heeded, and some were not. Those who heeded, listened to the words of divine wisdom, and preached on; those who did not heed, turned away. The ministry became more missionary than it was. Just at this point let the reader turn and read again the first twenty verses of the tenth chapter of Luke. The thing is there explained without a hint of the beginning of things anew.

The *missionary character* of the Church is also illustrated in the parable of the great supper. Here *aggressive* Christianity is most graphically set forth. Strange that Trench, who teaches so well about it, did not see beyond its vestibule. But then he had cramped himself down with the strange idea that Christ "had founded a Church in which there would be room enough for Gentile as well as Jew."

There was no *founding* of a Church, but there was the imparting to the Church aggressive force. The Church had long been saying, "Come, for all things are now ready." Now it says, "Compel them to come in"—that is, by that moral force which truth always exerts.

Let any one read this parable with the idea full before him, that it is intended to teach the great rational truth that now the time had come when it was meet and necessary for the Church to wake up objectively, and thrust itself out

into the "regions beyond," in openly attacking sin, with the view of its entire conquest, and he will likely see more beauty and force in it than some have hitherto discovered.

And, indeed, this is not only the leading idea of this parable, but of all the parables; and more than this, it is the great, leading idea of New Testament teaching. The great, practical difference between the Church before Christ and after Christ is, that in the former period its labors were mostly in-doors, quiet, passive, conservative; while in the latter, it is more bold, active, outgoing, laborious, aggressive.

CHAPTER LII.

RESPECTING THE "CALLING OF THE GENTILES"—WHAT IT WAS, AND WHAT IT WAS NOT.

MUCH of the current teaching on this subject is about as follows: Up to the time of the coming of Christ, the Jews—meaning thereby the descendants by birth from Abraham through Jacob—were the peculiar people of God, in the sense that all other people were left out of the divine economy of grace. All true religion was exclusively confined to these Jews until the time of Christ. And when Christ came, he set up a new and better system of religion than that revealed to the Jews; and they were required to leave their old religion and embrace the new; and because they would not do so, God cast them off, and "called" and adopted the Gentiles as his people. And so the Jews were abandoned, and thenceforward the Gentiles had religion offered to them. And hence the "calling of the Gentiles."

I am so far from believing this theory, that I regard the Almighty as no respecter of persons; that the first promise of salvation through a Saviour was made to all men, just as I believe the Scripture teaching is now made to and for the benefit of all men. Formerly, as at present, the means of grace were furnished more in some places and in some circumstances than in others. Such is the varied and changing providence of God. This was formerly just as it is now.

I can see plainly that for a time a special line of teaching was administered to a certain isolated people, not for their exclusive benefit, surely, but on the "school-master" principle, to teach teachers, to enlighten and qualify instructors, to set on foot and propagate a grand system of religious revealment, for the ultimate universal benefit of mankind.

This was not only the divine plan for the universal spread of religious truth in those days, but it is precisely the plan in operation now, varying with the changing condition and circumstances of the world. All this is easily seen. It looks natural, simple, and is strikingly accordant to both reason and revelation.

Most assuredly it always was, and now is, the bounden duty of all men living to worship God and be saved by Christ. And this could not be their duty unless God in mercy had thrown the pale of the gospel around them, and made them sensible of it in a degree proportioned to their several accountability. In different countries and different ages there has always been a great variety, in both kind and degree, of religious light and shade. Perfect darkness is found nowhere. A large portion of the world now is in about the same twilight condition as the old nations called Gentile were. And are they not included in the plan of grace? Religion itself, naturally and unavoidably, creates a relation between the Church and the rest of mankind. That relation is easily seen. It is the same now it always was.

This idea of exclusive Jewish grace is at least strange and seemingly unnatural, and requires very plain proof. The doctrine that *the Gentiles*—nine-tenths of the world—were never *called to be religious* until lately, would seem to require very explicit proof. But when we look into the books, it is very seldom attempted to be proved at all. Mr.

Watson says: "The prophets declared very particularly the calling of the Gentiles."

The prophets always and everywhere declared the final spread of the gospel over all lands and all people, and that ultimately every knee of man should bow in worship before God. If that is the calling of the Gentiles, then with equal truth it may be said that Mr. Watson has declared the calling of the Gentiles. The thing, however, which the prophets thus declared—not "particularly," however, by any means, but generally—has not yet happened, except partially. But it will certainly come about, because Christ is God.

Benson, Doddridge, Clarke, and others who copy them, and from whom they copy, understand the reply of the Saviour to the Canaanitish woman, in Matt. xv. 24, to mean that there was then no Saviour for Gentiles. He was not sent to them! Strange as this may seem, it is true, nevertheless. But if there were no other reasons against their conclusion, it cannot be true, because it makes the Saviour then and there violate his own principles and his own mission; for whatever verbal criticisms we may have on the very synoptic account we have of this conversation, it is true that the blessed Saviour did then and there carry his Messianic mission and work, in principle and in practice, openly and fairly, and against the remonstrances of his disciples, into the ranks of the Gentiles. He received her worship, commended her faith, answered her prayer, took her as a disciple, and healed her daughter whom he had not seen. The Saviour's remark is misconstrued by the authors above quoted. They prove vastly too much.

If, therefore, the Saviour, on this occasion, as these authors understand, and as I think is highly probable, intended to illustrate his Messianic relation to the Jews and Gentiles

severally, then his teaching is the very reverse of what they understand; for, regarding the woman as a representative of the Gentiles, he did, in blessing, acknowledging, and receiving her, show most clearly that he was sent to Gentiles and Jews in common.

Brown's *Religious Encyclopedia*, copying from Buck and Watson, says: "The prophets of the Old Testament dwell frequently and with benevolent delight on the future calling of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ."

If this means any thing, it means that prior to eighteen hundred and fifty years ago the people of the world, saving and excepting the children of Jacob, were not required to be religious. And that is called theology, and seems to pass current! But, repulsive as such an idea is, it is considered necessary to support the previous and more dangerous error of one system of religion for some certain people, and another and different religion for other people.

The prophets of the Old Testament, it is very true, dwelt with delight on the future ingathering of all people to Christ—the conversion of the Gentiles—all Gentiles. *That* prediction, however, it must be remembered, is not yet fulfilled. Fix or construe those predictions any way you will, and they are as yet unfulfilled—they are only in the course of fulfillment. If you choose to call these predictions the future *calling of the Gentiles*, then that is the name of that thing; and then it is apparent that that thing has not yet happened.

But the sense in which that expression is always used is, that prior to the Christian era, the Gentiles—all mankind, except lineal Israelites—were wholly and entirely *uncalled* to religious faith and duty; and that now, for the first time, an opening of grace was made to them—the first opening—and that a few out of their hundreds of millions obeyed the call and went to Christ. No such prediction as that was ever

made by any prophet. They predicted broadly, openly, plainly, in many places, the entire conversion of every person. As matter of fact, these prophecies look forward to the time when not one solitary sinner, born of a woman, shall stand upon this green earth of ours. Let any man examine and see.

The Gentiles were always called—that is, just as much, and in the same sense in which the same thing may be said of millions to-day, who for this reason or that have not the written gospel.

Mr. Watson's Institutes, Nashville edition, page 533, says: "It is easy now to see what is the import of the 'calling' and 'election' of the Christian Church, as spoken of in the New Testament." It may be plain to him, but I confess that, after all his labored, and at least somewhat confused argument, it is any thing but plain to me. And, moreover, Mr. Watson has already told us with great plainness and deliberation that there is no such thing as the Christian Church, distinguished from the Jewish—that it is not another Church, but "*the very same*" that always was. And here he places the two Churches in open and direct contrast, and attempts to show how God abandons the one and receives and owns the other.

To me, I confess, it looks very plain that this whole story of God's repudiation of the Jewish Church and people, and of his calling or electing another Church and people in their stead, is a myth, or fancy, with neither facts nor truth to stand upon. It is at war with all the reason and all the revelation I know of. It is a blot upon the merciful character of God, and the broad atonement of Jesus Christ. It is an unfortunate fact that, at the time of Christ, a large portion of the Church, a full half or more, *left the Church*, and set up a new and spurious Church, now called the Jewish Church. But this great apostasy, fully explained and

described in other chapters, did neither dismember nor discomfit the Church. The unbelieving Jews apostatized from their faith, and set up a new religion unknown to the Scriptures. Be it so. But God never turned away from his Church, nor called a new one.

CHAPTER LIII.

DOES THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES COMPRISE THE WHOLE, OR WHAT PROPORTION, OF THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF RELIGION?

MR. WATSON—Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Election—says: “They”—the Jews—“had been the only visibly acknowledged people of God in all the nations of the earth; for whatever pious people might have existed in other nations, they were not, in the sight of men, and collectively, acknowledged as ‘the people of Jehovah;’ they had no written revelations, no appointed ministry, no forms of authorized initiation into his Church and covenant, no appointed holy days, or sanctioned ritual.”

Mr. Watson could not know that all this is true; and indeed, with the same sources of information which he possessed, I cannot possibly believe it to be true. It looks like a part of that one-idea doctrine which makes human religion consist first, in “the Jews,” and their Church and religion, and then “the Christians,” and their Church and religion; the latter, like Pharaoh’s lean kine, destroying their predecessors.

Mr. Watson only conjectures, without testimony, that the Israelites had been, in all time past, “the only visibly acknowledged people of God in all the nations of the earth.” He could not know what piety or religious establishments

there might have been outside the tribes of Israel. They may have had no *written* revelations; neither had Israel for a long time, and then for other long periods it was but very sparse indeed. How far this is necessary to a true Church and true religion, may be a question difficult to answer; but it would seem hazardous to say that, outside of Israel, there was "no appointed ministry," and "no forms of authorized initiation into his Church," and "no appointed holy days, or sanctioned ritual." Indeed, I think there is some testimony to the contrary.

It was a long period from the flood to Christ; considerably over two thousand years, and very likely over three thousand. And during most of this time the world had a large population; and in all this long period there was, no doubt, far more of human incident, occurrence, history, in all the great rounds of social, civil, and religious variety, than have been seen among men since the Christian era. But no accounts, either written or traditional, have come down to our times. During some small and later portions of these long ages, we have some very little sketches of Israel, of Persia, Greece, and Rome, which we call history; but comparatively, it amounts almost to nothing.

Now, the entire of human history of the things which happened from the flood to Christ, and of which we have no written account, must have been most inconceivably vast, beyond all comprehension.

But we are told that this is all secular history; that none of it relates to religion; that the religious history is all in the Bible. This is the very point in question. How has it been learned that there was no religious history outside of Israel? Does the Bible intimate any thing of the sort?

Who was Job? That is a question which Mr. Watson is obliged to answer.

He gives us a good deal of negative information about

him : he says he was not socially connected with any religious establishment ; that his associates were not collectively acknowledged as the people of Jehovah ; that they had no appointed ministry, no forms of authorized initiation, no appointed holy days, nor sanctioned ritual.

It is certain that he was not an Israelite ; at least, I know of no one who pretends that he was. But he was a man of true religion ; yea, and he was a theologian of no mean stamp. Theology does not come by intuition ; it implies study, and a good deal of social, religious, or ecclesiastical association. No man is a theologian until by favorable opportunity he has long pursued the habit of comparing his own ideas and opinions with those of other men. And all this implies religion in a community-state considerably developed.

And then, his three friends—who were they ? They were not Israelites either ; they seem to be the ecclesiastical associates of Job ; they belonged to his Church ; they were acquainted with God and his providence ; and were certainly men of some parts in respect to religion. Two of them seem tinctured somewhat with what, at this day, we would call universalism, but the third was a theologian who would compare favorably with some who were considered men of renown in that branch of knowledge two thousand years afterward.

We may none of us know who Job was, but we cannot suppose him to have been a man without religious association. He was a Christian. This much may be said with safety. And so likewise were his three friends. And it is too much to ask us to believe that these four instances of Christian piety and theological knowledge should have sprung up as so many isolated productions, especially in that far-off age. Religion does not proceed in this way. It runs in gradually-increasing streams of social and intellectual communion.

Job certainly has taught the world some lessons in Christian theology which were treated far less lightly by prophets and apostles than by some later divines. See him on Human Depravity, in iv. 14; on Justification by Faith, in xxv. 4, etc.

And *who was Melchizedek?* Here is another instance of casual glance, where the history strikes outside the Israelitish channel.

We know very little more of Melchizedek than of Job; but he too was a man of true religion. It is said that he was a priest of the Most High God, and king of Salem. He and Abraham knew each other—at least from character—well; and the latter recognized in the priest a prince of exalted position and great renown, a friend of God and man, of true faith and piety. In what particular sense the term "*priest*" is here used as applied to this man, we may not know with certainty, but we may conclude that—first, he was a minister of religion, or preacher, as we now commonly say; and secondly, he belonged to an "*order*" of priesthood. And this proves him to have been a Christian; for the very idea of *priest*—a divinely-recognized priest—prior to the coming of Christ, implies, and is inseparable from, the *teaching* of Christian theology. Divinely-recognized priests, anterior to Christ, were instrumental teachings of Christ—the one great, real Priest.

This word *order* is undoubtedly used in the sense of *rank*, *class*, or division of men, kept up perpetually or regularly. That Christ was "a priest for ever after the *order* of Melchizedek," does not, by any means, imply that the latter stood by himself, without predecessor or successor. Order of priesthood is not predicated of Christ, but of Melchizedek. The meaning is, that the *priesthood* of Christ did, in some respects, resemble the *order* of priesthood to which Melchizedek belonged.

The conclusion is, that Melchizedek belonged to a religious establishment outside of Israel.

But whatever differences of conjecture there may be with regard to Melchizedek's order of priesthood—for they could be scarcely called opinions—he was certainly a member of a religious community. Some call him a type of Christ; but with him before you, you cannot say that Israel was “the only visibly-acknowledged people of God;” and that beyond the Israelitish Church there was “no appointed ministry,” nor any “appointed holy days, or sanctioned ritual.”

And again, *who was Balaam?* Balaam was not an Israelite, and yet he was a prophet, and proper worshiper of the true God. He was not only not an Israelite, but we have no reason to suppose that he had any knowledge of such a people. His conduct in the matter, merely casually and but very imperfectly glanced at in Scripture, may not be approved by us—that is, so far as we understand it; but it is well known that he was a true minister of religion, and his ministry was divinely-recognized. From what we know of him, we are not at liberty to suppose that he had no religious associations. We might as well suppose as much of any of the Israelitish prophets.

We have at least these historical glances in regard to priests, ministers, and worshipers of God, contemporary with and outside of Israel. Who can say, then, that outside of Israel there was “no appointed ministry,” and “no authorized initiation into the Church,” and “no appointed holy days, or sanctioned ritual”? Who knows how much of the Church of God was outside, and what proportion inside the pale of Israel?

Moses and the prophets did not undertake to write a history of the world, nor of the religion of the world. Indeed, they wrote no *history* of any thing. They sketched

some very brief historical notes. For this there were important reasons, connected with the question of the personal identity of Christ, and no doubt other important matters, of which we know but very little.

The religion outside of Israel may have been, at times, ten-fold, or a hundred-fold, greater than that inside; but it partook of the general character of religion prior to the sending out of Abraham. Subjectively, it was the same as any other true religion, for there can be but one kind; but objectively—in its community character—it was not so based, and with such forms, as would make it leaven the whole lump of mankind. The social, ecclesiastical, and objective forms and characteristics implanted into the Israelitish family, and continued to this day, though not superior to the religion of Abel, of Noah, of Job, and Melchizedek, so far as the salvation of any particular person is concerned, was, nevertheless, the only external system of religion adapted to the entire renovation of the world and the subjugation of mankind.

CHAPTER LIV.

"THE DISSOLUTION OF JUDAISM," AS HELD BY NEANDER
AND OTHERS.

THIS learned German theologian, in his *Life of Christ*, p. 39, holds the following language in a complete section, and under the following head :

"Affinity of Christianity, as absolute truth, for the various opposing religious systems.

"On the dissolution of Judaism, its elements originally joined together in a living unity, necessarily produced various religious tendencies which mutually opposed and excluded each other. In all these we can find nothing akin to the new creation of Christianity. And, wherever Christianity appears for the first time, or reveals itself anew in its own glory, it must offer some points of affinity for the different opposing systems. The living, perfect truth, has points of tangency for the one-sided forms of error, though we may not be thereby enabled to put together the perfect whole from the scattered and repellent fragments."

However obscure some portions of the above may be, there are some things in it which are plain. And, in the first place, I remark, that the qualifications here given to Christianity have, and *can* have, no meaning whatever. There is no such thing as "absolute truth" in distinction to some other truth not absolute. All truth is absolute in the strictest sense,

and always in the same sense. Sometimes truth is applied to religion, and sometimes to other things; and so sometimes it applies to very important things, and sometimes to things less important; but the truth itself is always of the same character. It is as true that two and three are equal to five, as that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Truth is one thing—the things to which truth may be applied are another. Botany is true, and Christianity is no more. Truth admits of no qualification nor degrees of comparison.

The teaching above, therefore, that Christianity has affinity for the various opposing systems of religion, because its truth is "absolute," is no teaching at all, for the reason that the words do not convey an idea. But there are some other things in the extract sufficiently explicit to require some notice.

Is it true that Judaism was *dissolved*? The thing is so coolly assumed that it would seem not to admit of question. What is *Judaism*? And what is *dissolved*? I know of no difference of belief with regard to the meaning of these words.

Judaism is a system of religion, and is written, word for word, in the Old Testament Scriptures; and *dissolved*, in the sense here meant, is wasted away, ended, broken, destroyed; dissolution is complete destruction.

Now, is it true that that system of religion suffered destruction? Was it destroyed? Did the introduction of Christianity, or of something, destroy that system of religion, so written, which we call Judaism? If this was done by the divine authority of Christ, then, in the name of consistency, let us be true to ourselves and confess it. If we believe it, why do we not come square up and talk it and teach it?

Who believes that, "on the dissolution of Judaism," eighteen hundred years ago, such and such things ensued? No-

body. It is the clerical phraseology of fashionable and fanciful theology, but it finds practical belief nowhere. If Christianity is, or became a "new creation," a new supplanting system of religion, originating at the time of Christ, and taking the place of a defunct system, then let the dissolved system be at least expunged from the house of God and the Christian Bible. To retain it is simple desecration.

The "new religion," as it is frequently called by Neander and others, is in no sense new nor different from that which he says was "dissolved." It is neither new nor different, because it contains not a doctrine of religion or rule of ethics not already written and in full force in the Old Testament. The New elaborates, explains, and enforces those doctrines and rules, and does nothing else. Let any man try to find *any thing else* in the New Testament.

Neander, like many others on this subject, is inconsistent. He teaches *pro* and *con*. He teaches that the Old Testament is good, and he teaches that it is bad. He teaches that it is dissolved, and he teaches that it is intact. He teaches that it is superseded, and he teaches that it is in full force.

It is not unfrequent that a minister will elucidate several Old Testament passages, *proving thereby*, as he says, *every doctrine of religion known to theology*, and will then read without objection, from Neander and others, that Judaism is *dissolved*!

Neither has Neander a right to place the Old Testament religion in the category of "opposing systems," and "one-sided forms of error"—though that would be its position if it were "dissolved." We Christians recognize the whole of the Old Testament as Scripture intact, and not merely a part of it. It is just as perfect and just as "one-sided" now as it ever was.

The clumsy idea—clumsy enough, however popular it may be—that the people called *Jews* since the apostles, are the ecclesiastical successors of the *Jews* before the time of the Saviour, will not bear the test of examination a moment. This point is elaborated elsewhere. To this modern *Judaism*, as this particular form of deism is generally called, Dr. Neander makes no allusion. The Judaism which he *dissolves* is the true, divinely-recognized Judaism of Scripture, the true Church of the living God, as it existed before the time of our Saviour. The former was not then "dissolved," because it did not then exist. For it I have neither defense nor apology. But the latter must be defended because it is the Church.

CHAPTER LV.

CONCERNING THE "BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM." WHAT
WAS BEGUN AT JERUSALEM?

AMONG the last instructions given by our Lord to his disciples was the following: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke xxiv. 47.

Now, the question is—What was it which was thus to be begun at Jerusalem?

Doddridge says: "It was both graciously and wisely appointed by our Lord, that the gospel should begin to be preached at Jerusalem."

Clarke says: "Making the first overtures of mercy to my murderers."

Benson says: "That the heralds of divine grace should begin at Jerusalem, was appointed both graciously and wisely."

Burkitt says: "Yet there will he have the doctrine of repentance preached; nay, first preached."

I know of no fair, useful way to handle either words or ideas but a plain, rational way—naturally and according to common sense; and so I am quite unable to understand any of the above quotations in a way that will not violate

plain, notorious, historic truth. Perhaps I ought not to say that; but what else shall I say?

When Doddridge speaks about "*the gospel*" being "*preached*," I understand that preaching the gospel is instructing men in a revealed religion—exhorting them to be saved from sin by Christ—offering men salvation by divine authority through Christ our Saviour. Or, it may be, and often is, described in many other forms of expression, but they all mean the same thing. And when Dr. Doddridge tells us that this *began* to be done at Jerusalem, after the resurrection of our Lord, he tells us that which everybody knows to be untrue, and about which there can be no difference of opinion. Everybody knows that the Saviour himself had been doing this very thing, among others, for about three years before that; and that John did the same thing before that; and that all the prophets, and many others, including Noah and Abel, did exactly that thing, to the salvation of thousands, hundreds and thousands of years before the days of John or the apostles.

Will Dr. Doddridge say, or will anybody say for him, that the gospel—salvation by the Spirit of God through Christ—was not preached, taught openly, orally, in the Church, and that thousands were not saved thereby, many hundred years before the time he speaks of? Then why does he say so? And why do we tolerate such teachings?

And when Dr. Clarke tells us that "*the first overtures of mercy*" were then and there made to the murderers of the Lord, he tells that which does not admit of debate; for both he and everybody knows very well that "*overtures of mercy*"—exactly the kind of overtures he speaks of—were made to other murderers, and to all classes of sinners, by Isaiah and many other ministers of religion, long before that time. If he had said that now, for the ten thousandth time, such overtures of mercy were made, he would have

said what the Scriptures, all over them, abundantly testify.

Benson says the heralds of divine grace began there, at Jerusalem. It matters not whether by "herald" he means a proclaimer or harbinger: everybody knows that, in either sense, "divine grace" was heralded wide and loud among at least a considerable portion of the people of the world—as is the case now—both graciously and wisely, hundreds and even thousands of years before the time he speaks of.

Burkitt says that "the doctrine of repentance was *first* preached" on the occasion in question. Well, as a matter of simple historic fact, everybody knows that that statement is plainly contradicted on almost every page of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. The doctrine of repentance is taught all over the Scriptures from the first, and was always preached. Certainly no one can mean that repentance, as a religious doctrine and duty, was a new thing in the days of the apostles.

Then what was meant by *beginning at Jerusalem*? To me, this question looks as simple and plain as it is rational and natural. I will not, however, fearlessly affirm what it does mean, as I do above fearlessly affirm what it does not mean; for in matters admitting of difference of opinion, my opinion is of no more value than that of any one else.

I understand that the apostles were to begin there, simply because they were there—rather than to go somewhere else and begin—to proclaim the *fact* of a risen Saviour, in connection with the old, or ordinary doctrines and precepts of religion, which they and all other true ministers had always preached. This fact was no new doctrine by any means, but was as old as Abel. The accomplishment of the *fact* was the only new aspect in the matter. Before this time, of course, the doctrine was preached prospective to the fact.

Now, for the first time, the fact could be stated. It is certain they were to preach no new thing, in the sense of a new doctrine, or precept, or condition of salvation, because he stated to them that they were to preach that which was "written" within the Old Testament.

All this is very natural. The doctrines and precepts of religion were all long since written in the Scriptures; and they were understood as far as they were understood, and obeyed as far as men obeyed them—just as they are now. The external, historic events in the human life of the Saviour, did not happen until they did happen; and so previously these were anticipated, and subsequently they are looked back upon historically. But eighteen hundred years ago no new things happened except mere historic events, just as all events happen, or occur, historically. But the faith of the Church remained the same; the doctrines, precepts, and religion, and the Church itself, remained uninterruptedly the same.

Now, suppose the Saviour had told them in different words, as he did in effect tell them, to continue to preach the written doctrines of the Church without change, and to begin right here where you are, where these recent, long looked-for, long forewritten events had occurred—what would the apostles have done?

Why they would have done exactly what they did do—preach repentance, faith, prayer, humility, forgiveness, atonement, heaven, and future punishment, just as the Church had always preached these same things. And as to the actual events which had so recently happened they would of course preach them too. But to be consistent, to preach the same doctrines, they would no longer preach these things as future, because they are no longer future. They would no longer present arguments and prophecies to prove that they would happen, but testi-

mony showing that they had happened. That is what we do now.

And suppose they had inquired of the Saviour what they should do with regard to the ceremonies of the Church? His reply would have been: "The ceremonies will regulate themselves if you maintain the doctrines and precepts right: those which *pointed forward*, by way of instruction, to these recent events, personal to me, will abate, of course—they in their very nature must cease. The sacraments must of course continue; but the former modes in which they were administered being forereaching—pointing forward to these recent events—these modes must change, and so I have adopted new rites for the administration of the sacraments."

Of course it never before happened that the ministers of religion could point to the accomplished facts of Christ's death and resurrection. Before, they could only teach the doctrine; and the visible *facts* are useful to us only as they furnish better evidence of the truth of the doctrine than, in the nature of things, could be furnished before.

Now they can exhibit the religion of the Old Testament in a light far more clear and powerful than ever before. Now they can point to the confirmation of those things, which before could only be anticipated.

But this was no more a new religion, nor a first preaching of the gospel, than the looking back on an eclipse that has happened is a new system of astronomy. Nevertheless, many of the Jews of that day were greatly in error with regard to many of the doctrines as well as the facts of their Church and religion. They all believed in Christ, but many of them repudiated Jesus. So that *his* death and reported resurrection were not heeded by them. And, obviously, it was just as necessary then as it is now, that Jesus should be identified with Christ.

It was in the highest degree important, therefore, that the apostles should *begin* right there, in the Church, the Church in which they were all born, at their great center of Church operations, to publish the death and resurrection of their Lord, as it was long since written, but as the facts had just now happened, and so to urge and enforce the truths they had always believed.

And so it is quite easy to see great force in the instruction, "beginning at Jerusalem." But the idea of then and there *beginning* to preach "the gospel"—to "preach repentance"—to make "overtures of mercy" to wicked men—to "herald divine grace," is first, to take a very shallow view of these religious teachings; and secondly, to make the plainest and openest war on the plainest and openest historic truth.

CHAPTER LVI.

CONCERNING “THE LAW OF MOSES.” WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY THIS EXPRESSION?

THE expression, *The law of Moses*, is frequently used in Scripture, and means, sometimes the Decalogue, sometimes the Book of Deuteronomy, sometimes the entire Pentateuch, and sometimes certain blessings and curses pronounced by the Almighty, through the agency of Moses; but it is generally used to mean the entire system of religion as it is written in the Old Testament. This is the sense in which it is uniformly understood in theological language, unless there be something in the context denoting a different meaning.

We are sometimes told that the law of Moses is divided into two parts—the *moral* and the *ceremonial*. The former, being adapted to mankind generally, is still in force, and is binding on all men; while the latter, being intended only for Jews, was repealed on the coming of Christ. On these points I hope to make some observations in the next chapter.

Mr. Watson says—Biblical and Theological Dictionary, Article Law—“The love of God is everywhere enjoined in the Mosaic law as the ruling disposition of the heart, from which all obedience should spring, and in which it ought to terminate.”

Then, if this is true, which I presume cannot for one

moment be doubted, how can Dr. Clarke—end of Romans—complain of teachers who taught that “no man could be in a state of acceptance with God without observing the law of Moses”? And again, “The Jews who were for joining the *law* and the *gospel* together, were also great enemies to our apostle.”

These persons are complained of because they inculcated the highest and purest morality known to revelation. That must be a mistake. The error of these persons complained of by St. Paul, and to which the Doctor refers, was not that they *followed*, but that they *departed from*, the law of Moses. Their error was not in understanding what the law of Moses did really teach, and for teaching contrary to it. The law of Moses—meaning thereby what Mr. Watson describes it to be, as above quoted—is the very same system of religion precisely which Paul preached.

The same sacraments in the Old Testament are in the New, and, as we have formerly shown, did not change, and cannot change. Religious principles—belief, faith in Christ, doctrines, morals—did not change. Surely the relation between God and man did not change. Then what changed? Nothing but the mere *modes of teaching*. And these modes changed—such of them as did change—because the nature of things required it, because some of them were *before*, and some *after*, the human appearance of the Saviour; but not because of any merely arbitrary command. The thing was so apparent and obviously necessary that it seems not to have required any instructions. The sacraments could not now be administered in some ritual forms which would *point forward* to Christ's coming and death. Before the event they *anticipated* it, or, as they say, typified it; whilst afterward they *commemorated* it. To have done otherwise, would have thrown the practical and rational theology of the Church into ridicule and inconsistency.

But in neither case, according to the teachings of both the Old and New Testaments, was there any religion, nor any religious faith in a knife, nor in a few drops of blood, nor in the flesh of an animal, nor in water, nor in a cup of wine, nor a few pieces of bread. These things are nothing but *instruments*—they may be used for various purposes.

And if St. Paul understood these things better than some of his more erring and ignorant brethren—as we find was the case—why, be it so; but to predicate these errors of “the law of Moses,” and of the “Jewish religion,” is to predicate error of divine teachings.

No religion was ever *prescribed to Jews*. All the religion known to Scripture was *revealed to mankind*. The idea that some particular religious tenets were specially prescribed to some particular class of persons, will not bear the test of examination a moment. The process will soon run you into absurdity, if not into profanity.

The visible work of the Messiah being yet in the future, it *could* be taught only by symbolic representations, because this is the only mode possible by which ideas can be originated; and to pre-represent a thing which has happened, is absurd. The external act of last year would have no meaning now. To keep up the same meaning, your external modes of representation must, in many things, be changed.

Now, at the coming of Christ, many Church-members did not understand this reasoning. It is much easier for us to talk about it now than it was for them to realize it then. They mistook the meaning, the teaching of some of their own religious performances; they knew the lesson, but overlooked its true meaning; and so they failed to see the necessity of the changes. They could not, for instance, see how the thing meant in circumcision, could now be intelligibly performed in what we call baptism.

The law of Moses, understood to mean the system of

religion of the Old Testament, was, and still is, written. Those who understood and practiced it were Christians; those who misunderstood it, and so departed from it, stood in the same relation to religious truth as a man now who misunderstands the theory of religion.

It is, and always was true, that "no man can be in a state of acceptance with God without observing the law of Moses."

What is meant by *observing the law of Moses*? It can only mean to conform to the doctrines and precepts of religion written in the Old Testament. That system of religion has not been changed in a jot or tittle. Circumcision, considered as a mere physical manipulation, was not a part of that religion; though the *sacrament* thus outwardly performed was. The sacrament remains intact. The manipulation changed from a necessity growing out of the historic religious fact that a part of the period of the Church was *before*, and a part *after*, the Messianic Advent. And just so of the other sacrament. Every thing making up the RELIGION of "*the law of Moses*" remains, and will ever remain, in full force.

It is not only true, but it is abundantly taught in both the Old Testament and the New, that those *outward modes* must change on the appearance of Christ. Let this be borne in mind—that the law of Moses everywhere required and enjoined that the outward forms, those which anticipated Christ, and which the Saviour did not continue, were to be observed up to the period of Christ's coming and death, *and no longer*. So that those who continued them beyond the limited period, did so in violation of all the authority in the Old Testament; that is, such acts, after this period, possessed no *religious* character. The precise limit to which these religious ceremonies were to be carried is unmistakably found in this—that they *anticipated, looked*

forward to Christ's coming. Then, how could they be so used beyond this period?

But, though these outward manipulations were no part of the Mosaic religious system proper, yet the great principles they were intended to teach rendered them very important in that period of time; but they were only *instrumentally* important. They had in themselves no sacramental virtue; they had the same relation to a sacrament as a table, a white cloth, and a goblet of wine now have. The error was not in attaching *too much* importance to these things. It was in the kind, not the degree, of importance.

I submit, then, that St. Paul did not—as Mr. Watson and others say he did—complain of the Galatians, nor of anybody else, *for adhering to the law of Moses*, rightly understood. He complained of them for observing what the law of Moses was not, for what some erroneously supposed it to be—not for what it *was*. If Paul repudiated any part of the Old Testament, why do not we do the same thing now?

Macknight on the Epistles, p. 276, says: “Not long after the Galatians embraced the gospel, certain Jewish Christians, zealous of the law of Moses, came among them and taught them, that unless they were circumcised, and obeyed the law, they could not be saved.” This, he says, was an *error*. The truth is, it was an error, because it is a contradiction. To be “circumcised” after the death and resurrection of Christ, was not to obey the law, but was to depart from the law; *because the law in the Old Testament limited circumcision to the period before Christ's death*. If you obey the law, therefore, you cease to circumcise on the coming of Messiah. Strange that Macknight did not see this. And on the next page he tells us that, “Then, by a variety of arguments, taken from the Jewish Scriptures, he (Paul) completely confuted the error of the Judaizers.”

These two things cannot both be true. Paul could not

prove *by the Jewish Scriptures* that *conformity to the law of Moses* was an error. That would make "the Jewish Scriptures" convict the "law of Moses" of error. These two expressions—Jewish Scriptures, and law of Moses—can only mean the same thing.

It is wonderful the learned author did not see the blunder.

Those persons who were guilty of this error were not *conforming* to the law of Moses, but *departing from it*. They were in favor of circumcision when the law of Moses teaches that circumcision cannot exist; they, contrary to the law of Moses, taught circumcision *after* the humanity of Christ; whereas, the law of Moses everywhere teaches that circumcision can be religiously performed only *before* the humanity of Christ. And does any one wish to be cited to some of those passages in the law of Moses where circumcision is limited to the period before Christ? If so, I cite—as above noted—to every place in the Old Testament where the word *circumcision* is used. One of the essential elements of its meaning and teaching is to *pre-represent* Christ, to point *forward* to his future coming.

Verily, Paul did prove *from the Jewish Scriptures* or the *law of Moses*, whichever expression any one prefers, that the circumcision which Moses taught and enjoined could not exist after the coming and work of Christ.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE SO-CALLED CEREMONIAL LAW WAS NOT ABOLISHED.

WE are told that the divine LAW of religion, as prescribed to the Jews, was in two parts, or rather, that there were two laws—the *Moral* and the *Ceremonial*. The former was permanent, and therefore descended into Christianity; while the latter, being only for Jews, was abolished at the coming of Christ. “Abolished,” “repealed,” “abrogated,” are interchangeably used to mean the same thing in respect to the cessation or discontinuance of the ceremonial law.

We have become so accustomed to hear that this particular law has been abolished, that we are not at all startled at the idea that a *law of God* had been *repealed*. But, to reflect a moment—*How can a law of God be abolished?*

A divine law is neither more nor less than a *truth*—any truth; and all truth, discovered or undiscovered, revealed or unrevealed, stands upon the same common level of primary, innate immutability. The repeal of a divine law is an impossibility. No law can be repealed except on the ground of error in the enactment—error either intrinsic in the law itself, or a lack of foresight into the future circumstances in which the law is to operate; and as no truth can ever cease to be true, so no divine law can ever cease to be a law. A law made in perfect wisdom can never be re-

pealed in perfect wisdom, for the reason that God is not wiser at one time than at another.

Or to state the proposition otherwise: We need not say that God *cannot repeal* a law. It is enough to say that he cannot *make* a law that ever ought to be repealed, for the reason that he cannot be in any degree unwise. That God cannot repeal a law of his own making, is but a simple necessary deduction from his supposed infinite wisdom.

Repealable laws are defective laws—human laws. But divine laws, being made in infinite wisdom, cannot be repealed, because no such laws can be made. This is precisely the difference; and really, if looked carefully into, it is radically the only difference between divine and human laws: the former are fixed and immutable, because they are absolutely and undeviatingly true; and the latter are always more or less unwise, uncertain in their application, and therefore subject to repeal. A law is repealable only because it is defective.

Repeal of a law is not therefore the right phrase to use in regard to the disuse of certain ceremonies in the Church, which were once, but are no longer, in vogue.

God's laws are immutable. But it is in the very nature of law, all law, to look forward into its future operations; and as these operations lie in a world of constant and rapid changes on every hand, if the law be wisely made, it must have particular and exact respect to these changes, and provide for them; that is to say, the practical operation of the law is contingent on these changes. The laws of God governing human conduct *operate* and apply to and under all the vast variety of human changes and circumstances; and if we suppose God to *change the law* at all with these changes, then we run into the absurdity of supposing ten thousand repeals and reenactments of law every day and every hour.

A young man is now under the control of his father, and now he is released from that control, but no law is repealed. A woman is now under the control of a certain man as her husband, and now she is under no such control, and she is now under the control of another man. But the law of marriage has proceeded straightforward all the while. There were many laws of God which operated before the flood in a way in which by possibility they can never operate again, because they had a *prospective* reference to that event. Some laws operate or apply differently with every man, every day as he advances in life. The simple advance of years requires different conduct.

The laws of God respecting the diffusion of religious knowledge, must apply differently in practice, in the present literary state of the world, from what they should have done at the time of the exodus, or at any former time. Look at the thousands of things in this regard, which have changed with the advancement of letters and the improvement in arts and sciences, without any repeal of law. Under the same unrepealed laws of psychology, children are taught by different means from those used with older persons.

And again: many laws have direct and particular reference to certain events; and in all such cases the law applies differently *before* and *after* the event. Before the event, the law referred to it prospectively; and after it, retrospectively. This principle is important, and should be kept carefully in view.

This doctrine, that a law of God cannot be repealed, is not in the least infringed upon by *miracles* and *prophecies*.

Hume says a miracle cannot be believed, because it is "contrary to experience." It is true that a thing which is *contrary* to experience cannot be believed; and Mr. Watson very correctly replies to Hume, by saying that a miracle is

only *different* from experience, but not *contrary* to it. Rousseau, on the same subject, says that "God cannot derogate from the laws he has established." This is very true; nor is this done in miracles. In reply to Rousseau, Dr. Keith makes the following illogical argument: "It might not, perhaps, be unphilosophical to think that the same Almighty Being who, in such manifest wisdom and power, had established the universe in order, and set on it his seal, had still reserved to himself the authority and right of modifying or suspending, for a purpose which he had or might have decreed from the creation of the world, that order which he had impressed upon nature."

But if the miracle was *decreed from the creation of the world*, then *that* was a part of the law of nature. The law of nature is but the decree or mind of God. The miracle, then, was in conformity with the law, and not a violation of it, though it was a departure from *our* uniform experience. Or, as Watson very correctly remarks, "Experience informs us that one event has happened often; testimony informs us that another event has happened once or more." Who knows that our experience comprehends all possible laws of God? A miracle is a departure, not from the laws of nature, but from such laws of nature as our experience comprehends. It is an unlooked for, inexperienced thing. But the experience of God may reach farther into possibilities and comprehend it easily. The repeal of a law implies an after-thought; and who will say that the resurrection of Christ, or any other miracle, was in the Divine mind an after-thought?

And, one thought more. What do we mean by *actions* or *ceremonies* in religion, and what is their use? Why, is it not sufficient that we merely *think* right in relation to God, and *do* right to our fellow-men? Religious actions or ceremonies possess in themselves no intrinsic value.

But we are so constituted—the inlets to the heart and soul are so arranged—that man *is* favorably affected by these mere ceremonial actions. A man, other things being equal, will pray more profitably, in a praying posture, in the silent closet, or amid the fervent associations of the congregation, than in the ordinary pursuits of hurry and employment.

Ceremonies, then, are instruments of religious instruction. As Mr. Watson says, “Without such institutions, religion might be pursued, indeed, by a few of superior understanding and strong powers of reflection; but among mankind in general all trace of it would soon be lost.”

Religious ceremonies are therefore great natural helps in religion. They are almost necessarily quite numerous, for the reason that religious thought and teaching present so many points of variety. Whether there were more or fewer of these ceremonies in use in the Church before Christ than since, is a question that cannot now be certainly answered. It is certain, however, that there are more ceremonies in common use in the present day among all kinds of Christians, than we have any account of in the Jewish Scriptures.

But let it be distinctly remembered that, in their very nature, *religious ceremonies of all kinds are but MODES of teaching and impressing upon the mind, feelings, habits, and the religious truths revealed in the Bible.* Of themselves they embody no truth nor rule of moral action; they are not tenets nor doctrines, but the mere modes of inculcating tenets or doctrines.

We are now, perhaps, better prepared to look at some of the ceremonies of the Church, prior to the coming of Christ, and to see why some of them discontinued or were changed in form at that time.

A little reflection, coupled with a moderate degree of biblical knowledge, will enable any one to see, that in the

early and more crude ages of the world, religious actions were used, or ought to have been used, for two other purposes besides the general end alluded to above. In the first place, they were used as instruments in juvenile, primary teachings of religious knowledge. In that age of the world there was no literature, at least none for the great body of the people, and so these sacred actions were pressed into service and made exceedingly useful. And in the second place, these actions were strongly Christian, Messianic, or Christologic, in their teachings.

Christ was *in* and formed the sum and substance of religion then as now; but as those people lived before his personal appearance, and as that personal appearance was so vital to religion, and therefore necessary to be known, or at least partially known, and as this truth could only be taught by *pre-representation*, it was symbolized by these suitable religious actions.

And so these two things were thus taught in those ages. But ceremonies have no such uses now, for the very simple reason that, as to the former, it would be useless, because far better instruments of teaching are at hand; and as to the latter, the thing is impossible, because an event cannot be foreshown after it has happened.

According to much of the refined notions of these times, such animal sacrifices and other rude devotions which we see in the early days of the Church, are a very savage and absurd mode of promoting devout sentiments and religious dispositions. And so we regard them as so many *Jewish* modes of worship, or things making up a formal or ceremonial religion; whereas, they related not to Jews as such, but to the spirit and character of the age in which they were used. And so, if we look more carefully into the then existing condition of things, the genius and habits of ancient nations, and the peculiar circum-

stances of the Hebrews, these views and objections will vanish, and the great wisdom of these things will appear.

Horne's Introduction, vol. ii., page 120, quotes as follows from Tappan's Lectures: "When the practice of sacrificing was first appointed, the use of letters was probably unknown; consequently the mode of instruction by visible emblems or symbols was both indispensable and highly beneficial. In such a state of things the offering of animal victims was made to answer for the more simple and rational devotion which words are now happily fitted to express. When we consider sacrifices, with all their attendant rites, as appointed by God in order to assist the religious instruction, improvement, and consolation of man, we must conclude that the Most High would in the first instance clearly explain every part of this institution; otherwise it could not answer its proposed ends. Now, if the moral import of sacrifices were thus explained, the utility of them to mankind, in their rude and simple state, is beyond calculation. In untutored man, reason is weak, the mental feelings are heavy and rough, while sense, imagination, and passion, are the leading avenues both to the understanding and heart. To man thus situated, the appointment of sacrifices is peculiarly adapted, for they convey a most pathetic and awful address to his very senses, and thus rouse him to the most serious and impressive reflections. The frequent spectacles of bleeding and smoking victims, suffering and atoning for the guilty sufferers, would give them the deepest impressions of the purity, justice, and majesty of God, of the evil of transgressions, of their own ill-desert, and of the necessity of some adequate atonement, and of the readiness of the Deity to pardon the penitent. The numerous and diversified offerings of the ancient Jews, with the striking pomp which preceded and attended

them, were fitted not only to excite and express the most reverential, humble, and grateful devotion, but also to give the best direction to the whole temper and conduct. The many washings and purifications enjoined previous to the oblation of sacrifice, were not only physically beneficial in the Eastern countries, but directly intended to impress a simple people with a scrupulous regard to inward and moral purity, especially in all their approaches to the Deity.

“That this was the primary intention of those ceremonies, was a maxim frequently and solemnly enforced. In the early ages, the language of these well-chosen emblems could not fail to be well understood and strongly felt. Above all, the frequent sacrifices of the Jewish law were intended to prefigure and gradually to prepare men for the great atoning sacrifice of the promised Messiah. In a word, the religion of the Jews and that of Christians form one great and harmonious plan. The Jews saw gospel truth in its early and gradual dawn; we behold it in its meridian splendor. When Christ appeared, the candid and pious Jews embraced him, because they saw in him a glorious counterpart, a perfect accomplishment of their own rites and predictions.”

These are sensible, practical observations. They conform to the historic facts; and they intimate the glory, wisdom, and beauty of the divine laws so admirably adapted to the varied circumstances of mankind. As the mind of man is constituted, knowledge can be received only progressively. In the infancy of human knowledge religion *could not* be taught as it is now. It was necessary therefore, since the mental faculties are arranged as they are, that a knowledge of God and religion should be imparted in the early ages by successive lessons—necessary there should be a first lesson as a starting-point; and from

this primary principle a gradual, successive progression onward. This is the way all knowledge is attained.

Now, these elementary lessons must at some time be laid aside, because somewhere along in the line of history they become both useless and burdensome. But there is no repeal of a law. Indeed, it is by no means historically true, that these ceremonial observances, now in disuse, were laid aside at the same time, or in the same ages of the world. They went gradually into disuse as they became useless. At the time of Christ many of them had long since ceased. The synagogue, or congregational system of worship, which began to grow into practice in the time of the captivity, hundreds of years before Christ, superseded many of the elementary or juvenile teachings. But such of those ceremonies as looked *forward to the coming of Messiah*, must necessarily abate at that time. That is a part of their law.

These ancient ceremonial modes of teaching abated not because they were *ceremonial*, as many seem to teach, but for other reasons wholly. A ceremonial law in religion is as useful now as it ever was; and it would be a wide perversion of truth to say that the Church had not now a ceremonial law, in the same sense it had two or three thousand years ago. Surely Church ceremonies have not ceased, though some particular ceremonies have; some have become antiquated, obselete, useless; and others belonged naturally and necessarily to the ante-Messianic period of the Church. And so the Saviour tells us plainly that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. All the *laws* of religion exist now that ever did; and yet animal sacrifices and circumcision have ceased; but they have ceased for *reasons*—reasons contemplated and provided for in the law itself. And then it must be kept carefully in mind that these sacrificial observances are not laws of religion in the sense of

doctrines or ethics. They are mere rules for the inculcating of these Christian principles. They are but external and incidental modes of teaching religion. And so—let it be carefully noted—of circumcision and passover. They are not sacraments; they are mere external or physical modes of administering the sacraments. Sacrament means obligation—religious obligation. In ordinary parlance, we speak of circumcision or of baptism as one of the sacraments. The meaning is, that these are the two ritual modes—the former before, and the latter after, the death of Christ, in which the sacrament (or obligation) of personal homage or fealty to God is administered. And so, as elsewhere fully explained, passover was the mode before Christ, and the sacred Supper since, of administering the sacrament which binds us as members of a community to God through Christ. Sacrament, like any other kind of obligation, is one thing; the physical manner in which you administer a sacrament, is another.

There is a man who to-day assumes legal control over his patrimony, and over which he had no lawful control yesterday; but no law has been repealed. It is all in simple pursuance of the law made ages ago. There was no new law made last January, requiring that thenceforward for one year all written instruments should be dated 1867. The one law of chronology contemplated and provided for these changes; and so the law applies accordingly.

And yet some writers have carried this irrational notion of repeal and reënactment so far, as to inquire why any of the Old Testament laws are to be considered in force in Christian times, unless specially reënacted.

Can any man state any thing that happened at or about the time of Christ, that required a reënactment of some of the laws of God? Had the advent of the Messiah any thing to do with such a necessity? Why such a necessity at this

time more than at any other? Did universal nature dissolve into chaos? Did man's constitution dissolve and become a different thing? and he a different being? Was there an interregnum in providence, in man, and in nature? Why did some laws require reënactment more than others? Was the law of the attraction of gravitation reënacted? and why not, if any laws were?

Ritual observances, divinely prescribed, are common to all ages of the Church—indeed, to religion itself. Some of these forms, which were highly necessary in early ages, could not, and others must not, be continued; and so the law in that regard, having answered the end of its enactment, did not extend itself beyond its own provisions.

The sum of it is that, first, there is in the Old Testament no such distinct and separate *ceremonial law* as we oftentimes read of. In the Old as well as in the New, some of the instructions relate to religious ceremonies; but I do not know that there are fewer ceremonies in use in the Church since the Christian era than before. It is true, however, that Church ceremonies or observances are more specifically prescribed in the Old Testament than in the New. But none can fail to see the reasons for this: first, the new, unlettered condition of the world required it; and secondly, the ante-Messianic state of the Church required it. But it had no more to do with *Jews* as such, as many teach, than it had with climate or geography.

And secondly, no laws divinely prescribed to man have ever been divinely repealed. Indeed, this is impossible. Still, however, many laws of religion, of a more or less integral character, having accomplished the divine purposes in the enactment, no longer require to be met by the same external performances, though the principle in the law never changes nor can change.

It is a mistake which many seem to run into, to suppose that the Jewish ceremonial observances were always the same. These ceremonies apply to a Church spreading over considerable countries, and a period of fifteen hundred years. In these different ages and countries there was all the variety naturally incident to human affairs. Apply this principle to the Church in the last fifteen hundred years, and we have a fair illustration. As in the latter instance, so in the former, we find a few prominent things which were uniform; but even they did not by any means always present the same outward appearances. The great variety always observable in different countries and different ages, in manners, customs, government, and habits of life, sometimes in war, civil or foreign, and sometimes in freedom, and sometimes bondage—now with this kind of civil government and now with that—must have produced, as the history plainly shows, much variety in these mere forms of worshiping; and also, as previously noted, some of these ceremonies gradually went into disuse and became obsolete, as the obvious *reasons* for them ceased to exist.

These reasons were found in the different means and instruments used in teaching in different ages of the world. The chief means now used in conveying and diffusing thought are of but recent origin. Symbolic *actions* in former times were used as didactic language is now used. Formerly there was no literature; now written language moves and governs every thing. That which can be done now in a few lessons, formerly required several ages of cumbrous, unwieldy teaching. For thousands of years the Church had probably no written Bible; and then, after a time, it had only the Ten Commandments written on stone, and carefully kept in the sacred chest. A Bible for the people is a thing only of yesterday almost.

So as you travel back in the history of the Church in those early ages, from period to period, you meet many symbolic instruments, then useful, but which have long since been superseded by instruments of greater facility.

I am well aware that the word *abolished* is used two or three times by our English translators, in connection with the issues of those ceremonies which pre-represented the appearance of Christ. But this, for the reasons above, must be understood in the sense of *terminated*, or *issued*. They met their natural and contemplated end, and ceased.

CHAPTER LVIII.

CONCERNING THE JEWISH SUCCESSION, AND THE PECULIAR MARK IN THE JEWISH FEATURES. WHERE IS THE FORMER? AND WHAT IS THE CAUSE AND MEANING OF THE LATTER?

WE now approach some points of peculiar interest in this discussion; and in doing so, we inquire directly, *Where is the Jewish lineal succession to be found at the present day?* Do the descendants of the ante-Messianic Jews exist to-day as a distinct people? This question comes fairly before us without any misunderstanding. At the time of the birth of Christ, and previously, a people called *Jews* were well known and easily identified. They were well known at least by their religion; but that they *continued a distinct people* has, I think, been more frequently assumed than shown.

Bishop Burnet has treated "*their continuing a distinct people*," it is said, with great ability in his "*Four Discourses*," p. 8-10. Dr. Doddridge makes special mention of it. Addison—*Spectator*, No. 495—says: "The Jews are looked upon by many to be as numerous at present as they were formerly in the land of Canaan." By formerly, he means at or before the birth of Christ. He regards "the Jews" of the present day as forming the entire living descendants of "the Jews" at the birth of Christ. They are regarded as one people, remaining whole and entire; and that they have been

kept separate, unmixed and distinct, is regarded a remarkable providence.

This history is very easy-going, looks very simple, no one can misunderstand it. A Jew is physiologically marked. These marks distinguish and identify him as a *Jew*. It is the mark of Jacob. It follows him generation after generation, wherever he goes. The mark is physical, national. It is the mark of a family, a birth-mark. No descendant of Jacob is without it, and no other man possesses it.

The principal difficulty with this theory is, that it is historically untrue; it varies widely from the well-settled history. The peculiar features by which we identify a Jew at the present day, although they are certainly very distinct and unmistakable, the world over, do not mark *his lineal descent from Jacob*, but some different thing. There are certainly many, many thousands, and it is next to certain that there are many millions, of people now living who have descended lineally from the ancient Jews, and who have no such distinguishing mark; and secondly, this same mark attaches to many who are not of the lineage of Jacob. The mark has probably no reference to family, in an ancient line, but to a different thing.

It has been previously shown from Scripture that a very large number at least of the Jews at the time of Christ *received him*, and for a long time composed the entire Church, in connection with the apostles. For about ten or twelve years after the death of Christ, the entire Church consisted of Jews—that is, of those who had been previously called Jews, until the followers of the apostles must have amounted to hundreds of thousands, if not to millions. Christianity—as the Church came to be called—began with Jews exclusively. They were its sole friends and propagators; and most devoutly and heroically did they stand up in its defense against Jews and Gentiles, against all op-

posers of true religion from all quarters. At the very first opportunity that offered, three thousand of them openly espoused Christ at one place; and immediately afterward, here, there, and on all occasions, they openly declared for Christ by multitudes upon multitudes. Let any one read the first ten or twelve chapters of Acts, or even my previous chapter on this subject, and he will see how untrue it is for an author to say that "the Jews, all except a few, rejected Christ." Such a remark, however frequently made, or by whomsoever, is an unpardonable violation of the plainest history. It is impossible to determine with any thing like certainty whether the larger or the smaller portion of the whole body of Jews received or rejected Christ. Certain it is, that Jews who were justly and truly called Christians must in those days have amounted to hundreds of thousands, and most probably to millions.

Now, since this fact is certain, the question just now before us is, Where is *their* lineal succession? The two classes of Jews—those who received and rejected Christ—in a few years—as before explained—became widely separate. Both classes—with an exception common to both, which will be explained in a few minutes—were of course Jews by birth, or by religion; that is, the one was as much so as the other. But as *religious* parties, the one was now called *Jews*, and the other *Christians*. And they have remained separate, and have been so denominated ever since.

Now, the lineal succession of the rejecting Jews, or the "*Jews*"—as they afterward came to be exclusively called—is easily seen. They are the people generally known as Jews; they have the mark, *and they alone have it*. The other Jews—as clearly and purely Jews as they—(last year they were all one, and now the very same persons, called by another name on a mere religious account)—where is *their* lineal succession? They have no Jewish mark; they

have no mark. Where are they? Where are the descendants of the three thousand Jews who declared for Christ at Pentecost? and the "five hundred brethren," and the "five thousand"—the "many" so frequently mentioned—those spoken of as "all men"—the "multitudes" so frequently spoken of—"the people," mentioned more than once in this connection—"Samaria"—"a great company of the priests"—the "myriads"—indeed, the whole apostolic Church for ten years or more, every man and woman of them being Jews—have they no lineal succession? Beyond all question, their children—numbering millions—are now alive, in the world somewhere; and I repeat the question, Why do not they wear the Jewish mark?

It is plain, then, that "the Jews"—the whole body living at and before Christ—have not "continued a distinct people." It is only one branch of them who maintain this peculiar distinction; and we proceed to inquire, How is this to be accounted for?

The following hypothesis is by some regarded as most probable:

That this mark is not the sign of a race, but of an apostasy. It does not mark a lineage, but the greatest, the most wonderful, and most criminal of all human apostasies.

This greatest, highest, and by far the most criminal of all apostasies ever known in the history of religion, was visited by the heavy curse of Almighty God. He thus laid his hand, not upon *the Jews*, as a people—not by any means on the descendants of Jacob, as such—not upon his apostles, and followers, and the apostolic Church—all of whom are well known to have been Jews—but upon those Jews who so ruthlessly and criminally repudiated Judaism, denied the religion of Scripture, and thus opposed and revolted from the Christ of mankind. The curse rested upon the apostates; and there the mark of the curse remains to this day. Here,

and here only, lies the mystery of “their continuing a distinct people.” The Jews, as a race, never have continued a distinct people in a very remarkable length of time, beyond the same thing in other surrounding nations, except, perhaps, in the ages of their very remote antiquity; but the *apostate Jews* are, in this regard, a wonder in the world. The *Jewish mark* follows their descendants, wherever found in the apostasy.

Or, the following may perhaps explain it better: When the two parties of Jews became separate, they were very hostile to each other. The apostates regarded the Christians with the deepest hatred, and held them in utter social non-intercourse. And for some cause or other, they held all people in the same light. And thus, by constant, exclusive intermarriage among themselves, their physiognomy, whatever it chanced to be eighteen hundred years ago, remained the same. Since that time they have had no influx, and almost no outflow. In either case there is little or no inheritance from Jacob about it.

And so who among ourselves knows whether he himself is or is not a lineal descendant of Abraham, or of the Church as it existed at and before the Advent? The descendants of the early apostolic Church, amounting to hundreds of thousands, are somewhere—where are they?

But again: This well-known Jewish mark does not indicate a descent from Abraham lineally, for the reason that the people called Jews at the time of Christ were by no means all or generally regular descendants from that ancient fountain. In the course of fifteen hundred years they had been joined from without by proselytes to an aggregate so great that the pure, descending current from Jacob had become rather nominal than real. They were mostly a mixed blood. See our former remarks on this point. Where now in America are the exclusive descendants of certain English

and Scottish families only two hundred years ago? If not kept perfectly pure, blood mixes with wonderful rapidity in even a few centuries.

After the Hebrews had been one or two hundred years in Palestine, there was among them little or no pure blood in the line of the twelve patriarchs; and at the time of Christ, this mixture was, of course, common to both *rejecting* and *receiving* Jews. So that since that time, and in that period only, the rejecting or apostate portion of the Jews have "continued a distinct people." The remark of the *Spectator*, of Bishop Burnet, and the many authors who have copied them, is not correct, therefore, when predicated of "the Jews," in the sense intended, but only of the apostate Jews and *their* descendants.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS—BLUNDER CORRECTED.

THE history of the posterity of the twelve patriarchs presents some points of peculiar interest. Many prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments are understood by many to foreshadow the final *restoration*, or *inbringing* to the land of Palestine, of this people under the gospel system. And so that seems to be a debated question. But it seems plain to me that before that question can be debated, a previous question of vital importance must be settled.

Who are to be restored? What persons, or what classes of persons, does the restoration refer to? To say it relates to *Jews*, does not answer this question. By the term “Jews,” do you mean the entire living posterity of Jacob? or what branch or branches of the many divisions and subdivisions of this vast ancient family are to be included? And are the millions of other people, with no original connection with the house of Jacob, but who in various ages became Jews by embracing the revealed religion, and the progeny of which became thoroughly incorporated with the Jews by intermarriage, and, as the Scripture says, “became Jews,” are they to be included? Or, is it meant to include only the nation and people known as Jews in the Saviour’s time, and their posterity, whether they descended lineally from Jacob or not? Do the “Jews,” who are to be restored to

Palestine, mean the peculiar people now living in many parts of the world, and known as Jews, and who are the lineal descendants of that part of the Jewish people who eighteen hundred years ago apostatized from the Jewish faith by denying our Saviour? Or, lastly, are they an entirely different class of people, whom the Scripture calls Jews truly and properly, in contradistinction from those before-mentioned persons who falsely call themselves Jews?

The expressions used in Scripture denoting the persons or people to be "restored," are by no means definite. Sometimes they are called "my brethren," or "my kinsmen, according to the flesh;" sometimes "the children of promise," "Israel," "his people," "the outcasts of Israel;" sometimes "the olive-tree," or "my flock," "the remnant of his people," "those that came of Jacob," or "the house of Judah," etc., etc.

Now, the question is, How are you going to find and designate the persons meant by these various expressions? The Church of God at the time of Christ was generally called the Jews, or rather, we now generally call it by that name; but it is certain that it then embraced but a comparatively small portion of the then existing lineal posterity of Jacob. Probably not one-fourth, and may be not one-tenth, of the natural posterity of the twelve patriarchs were then in the Church, and so called Jews. And very soon after this we see the Jews divided into two widely distinct communities. One of these branches retained the name of Jews, while the other, by mere adventitious circumstances, after some years, took the name of Christians. And yet we are told in Scripture, in John viii. 39, and Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, etc., that the party called Christians were really and truly the Jews, and that the former were falsely and improperly called Jews.

It might be said that these Christain Jews were so “few” in number as to amount to almost nothing. This notion has been elsewhere shown to be a wide, wide error. In Acts xxi. 20—not to cite more than fifty other passages that might be cited in proof—we are told they amounted to “myriads,” or “many ten thousands,” meaning numbers immense, almost beyond computation. All the books so read the word “thousands” in that place.

Mr. Watson—Theological Institutes, p. 109—says: “A future restoration awaits this people.” And I ask, What people? By what rule is it decided that these ancient prophecies refer to those Jews who apostatized from their religion, rather than to those who remained in the faith, and were called Christians? Why do these ancient prophecies follow the forty-two thousand or forty-three thousand Jews who returned from the captivity in Babylon, and their descendants particularly and exclusively, rather than the hundreds of thousands or millions who scattered out into the world in a hundred different ways and directions, and did not return to Jerusalem and their posterity? It will be remembered that at the period of the return from Babylon, about five hundred and thirty-five years before Christ, the entire people of the world distinctively known and recognized as Jews, were reduced to less than forty-three thousand in number. The others—millions in number—had gone out by leakage in many ways, and had become mixed and mingled with the people of the earth.

The history of the Jews shows, beyond question, that the people now living, and distinctively known as such, compose but the smallest fraction of the national posterity of the twelve patriarchs. This point is elaborated more fully elsewhere in this essay. And, as the promises in regard to “restoration”—as it is called—refer, or seem to refer, to the posterity of Jacob generally, the question I raise is, How,

or by what rule, are they to be confined to this particular remnant?

This is a question of some importance. I only suggest it in this place without elaborating it, as I have done elsewhere. But why may not these prophecies refer to the "many ten thousands," or the "myriads," the "multitudes" of Jews so frequently mentioned, who became, or were afterward called Christians, at the time of the preaching of the apostles? They were Jews, undistinguishable from other Jews. And how is it determined that the prophecies in question follow this branch rather than that? The terms of the prophecies apply at least as well to these as to those.

And farther, considering that the Scripture clearly recognizes a spiritual as well as a fleshly Israel, and that it attaches far more importance to the former than to the latter, and that contingency is interlarded all through the prophecies; and since it is certain that these modern Jews are but a mere scattering of the entire lineal posterity of the twelve patriarchs, is it at least not highly probable that those who are looking for the Scriptures to be fulfilled in these respects, by the conversion of the apostate or modern Jews, are looking for that which has long since been accomplished in such Christians as the Scriptures declare to be true Jews?

The modern Jews, we are told in the Scriptures, are not Jews; they only "say they are Jews, and are not." They are "of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie."

Then I ask if this long argument about the "restoration of the Jews" presents a logical issue at all. What is the affirmation? and what is denied?

CHAPTER LX.

THIS DOCTRINE OF SEPARATING BETWEEN THE "JEWISH" AND "CHRISTIAN" RELIGIONS, LEADS TO AN OPEN REPUDIATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

IF there be any portion of the Old Testament which is not thoroughly and essentially Christian, then that much, at least, ought to be expunged from the Scriptures, because true religion is wholly and essentially Christian.

And so also, if the whole or any part of it falls short of Christianity, then that much of it is defective, and ought not to be used to teach religion to the people.

Neander—*Life of Christ*, p. 57—says: "We must conclude, however, that if John did recognize Jesus as Messiah, he applied to him all his Old Testament ideas of Messiah, as the founder of a visible kingdom. With these views, he would expect that Christ would bring about the *public* recognition of his office by his own Messianic labors, without the aid of *his* testimony."

Then there are "Old Testament ideas of Messiah, as the founder of a visible kingdom"! Then the Old Testament teaches that which is not true; for Messiah never *was*, nor was ever intended, to be the founder of such a kingdom. Either Neander or the Old Testament, therefore, teaches erroneously. But in either case, the learned divine plainly repudiates the Old Testament. But I hold that the Old

Testament and the New Testament ideas of Messiah are exactly alike, without an iota of difference.

Mr. Coleman—*Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, p. 91—says: “The grand characteristic of the Christian religion, in distinction from the Jewish—of the religion of the New Testament, contrasted with that of the Old Testament—was, that it utterly excluded all idea of a mediating priesthood,” etc.

This question of a *mediating priesthood* has been previously looked at; and I now call attention to the *contrast* and *distinction* said to exist between these *two systems of religion*, as is clearly affirmed. And I inquire, Is it possible there can be any such difference? Is the New Testament the divine standard of divine religion? Then why not be consistent; and exclude outright, and in terms, as Mr. Coleman does by necessary implication, all religious teaching which differs from it?

But, I hold it is not true that there is any “religion of the Old Testament,” nor any “religion of the New Testament,” nor any “Jewish religion,” nor any “Christian religion,” in the sense intended. You might as well talk of the religion of Matthew, and the religion of the Acts of the Apostles, and “*contrast*” them. There is no “characteristic difference” between “the religion” of the different parts of the Bible.

We have a Bible—a revealed Bible—and but one. No part of it is better or more holy than any other part. Who is this feeble, short-sighted man that sits in judgment on the revelation of God? that classes off revealed wisdom, and decides that this is defective, that that is a little better, and that that is good?

It is an impeachment of the divine perfections to suppose it *possible* for God to reveal some things at one time which are superior to something revealed at another time. St

Paul's interpreters are at fault. There are things explained more fully in Isaiah than in Obadiah; but who will dare to elevate the one above the other? God could not outdo himself and be perfect.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And it is well to remember that St. Paul here has exclusive reference to the Old Testament, for the New was not then in being.

Schaff, in his History of the Apostolic Church, devotes several pages (139-143) to *prove* that Judaism was a system preparatory to the introduction of Christianity—the true religion; and was superior to heathenism. At page 140 we read: "In the first place, we find that Judaism, along with the pure development of divine revelation, embodied also more or less human error and corruption."

That seems to me a desecration of sacred things! No, sir; it is impossible! There is not one word of human error from the first of Genesis to the last of Malachi.

Again he tells us: "Thus Judaism and heathenism, notwithstanding their essential difference, have some common features and connecting links."

This is also making very free with sacred things; and as to the thing stated, I deny it *in toto*. I deny that in what is called the *religion* of heathens, there is one feature or connecting link in it in common with Judaism. Heathenism does not know even God. It is all wrong. Heathen men do and cherish a good many things in common with Christians; but it is not their religion that so disposes them.

Again he tells us, page 165: "It (the religion of the Old Testament) has the only true notion and worship of God, who is the foundation of religion; in other words, it is *monotheism and the worship of God*, as opposed to polytheism,

dualism, and pantheism, and the empty worship of idols and of nature."

The religion of the Old Testament, *contrasted with*, or even *distinguished from*, Christianity—if you could so contrast it—is monotheism; and upon that hypothesis Schaff is right. The religion of modern Jews is monotheism; and if it be the same as "the Jewish religion" before Christ, or "the Mosaic religion," or "the religion of the Old Testament," or "Judaism," or whatever you choose to call it—for these are but different names for the same thing—then Christianity, from philosophic necessity, presents the same opposition to it, under whatever name it be given, as it does to any other form of deism. Let our arguments be consistent. The circumstance of monotheism having but one God, does not give it a feature in common with Christianity. The worshipers of the sun recognize but one God.

The simple teaching of Schaff here is, that the nearest point of approach of "the religion of the Old Testament" to that of the New is, that it recognizes but *one* God. And this is Christian theology; and historic of the apostolic Church! Schaff is a pupil of Neander, living in this country, and professor in a theological college.

But still, Schaff goes but one step farther than many others, and in precisely the same direction. The very moment you begin to speak of "the religion of the Old Testament," and the religion of "Christianity," in distinction from each other, and consider the latter superior to the former, then you set yourself up as a judge of the merits of the divine teachings, and subject the wisdom of Infinity to the arbitrament of perhaps the feeblest of all creatures in the universe, who can reason at all.

Dr. Jameson, in his *Notes on the XXV. Articles*, is undoubtedly correct in saying that, "The Bible is but one book; it is the work of but one author; and has but one common

object; though different men, and at different times, and in different places, were employed in its composition. These men were under the inspiration of but one God, who is perfect in his knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, and therefore cannot in any degree contradict himself."

Jehovah has spoken but few words to man in human language. These words are found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. They are precious words of divine religious teaching. They are wise words, right words, true words. It becomes man to listen, not to criticise and judge, among these lessons. Religion divinely revealed—and, therefore, exactly true—is breathed forth in every part of it. It is all profitable. None of it is abrogated, because it is all true; none of it is second-rate, because it is all divine.

CHAPTER LXI.

HOW ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND THE "BETTER COVENANT
ESTABLISHED UPON BETTER PROMISES"?

ON this point I must beg pardon of some of St. Paul's interpreters. Dr. Clarke, on Hebrews viii. 6, says: "The Old Covenant referred to *earthly* things, the New Covenant to *heavenly*; the Old Covenant had promises of secular good, the New Covenant of spiritual and eternal blessings. As far as Christianity is preferable to Judaism; as far as Christ is preferable to Moses; as far as spiritual blessings are preferable to earthly blessings; as far as the enjoyment of God throughout eternity is preferable to the communication of earthly good during time; so far does the New Covenant exceed the Old." And he tells us that he uses the word Covenant as synonymous with Testament.

And one of the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church in England and America reads as follows: "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator," etc.

Here is certainly a contradiction. I believe the Article; and I farther suggest, that if the Old Testament promises secular good, earthly blessings only, it is with doubtful propriety, if not manifest error, that the Doctor calls it a system of religion. Religion, in the nature of the thing, has

to do with the affairs of the next world; otherwise it is mere social ethics.

The idea of Paul in regard to a *better* Covenant, upon *better* promises, cannot be made to mean that the one possesses superior moral or legal excellence above the other. This would lead us into the absurdity of supposing that some of the divine words or works *lacked*, or were *wanting* in some possible good. The words and works of God are all *perfect* in every sense. Then we must find some other interpretation.

And so let it be remembered that the plan of the Almighty was, that Christ—the common Saviour—should delay his personal appearance among men for a time. This, we are taught, was necessary; at least it was so. And so previous to his coming, as well as since, it was necessary that religion—the only religion of God—should be taught. But it was impossible, in the nature of things, it *could be* taught, at least understandingly—so full when the Saviour could be spoken of only in anticipation as when he could be seen and known—when his death and atonement could be not only a truth taught, but a fact seen. And then, when his life and death could be pointed to as palpable, historic facts, and so become fixed and immovable in the mind, it might well be spoken of as *better*. But this superiority is not in the thing taught, but in the superior capacity of man now to receive it.

A necessity arises out of the constitutional capacity of man to receive instruction, that it be administered to him gradually—one thought received creating a capacity for the lodgment of another, and so on.

When one man teaches better things than another, it is because he is more wise or more good; or when the same man teaches better things at one time than another, it is because of human imperfections; but God is perfect.

Dr. Clarke, I think, is most certainly in error in the contrast he draws above between Christ and Moses. Moses was no more the author of the Old Covenant than Doctor Clarke was. He probably never had half so much to do about it, nor labored so much in it. Nor is it probable he understood its theory so well. Christ was wholly and solely the author of both Testaments; Moses was a mere instrument, or amanuensis.

But is it true that the religion of the Old Testament had reference to merely "*earthly* things"? that its promises were of merely secular good? I italicize particular words precisely as the Doctor does, to give them the exact relative meaning he intended. Do these Scriptures contain only "the communication of earthly good during time"? Were these the teachings which the Old Testament saints drew—and correctly drew—from the revealed Scriptures?

It is only when the Doctor (and others could easily be named in the same category) gets to explaining about the "more excellent ministry," the "better Covenant," and the "better promises," in Hebrews and other places, that he puts forth the strange doctrines quoted above. The particular line of thought then before him is the *two dispensations*, the *law* and the *gospel* "contrasted;" and overlooking, as I think, the true and simple import of those teachings, he suffers himself to go to the logical results of such premises, which is, that there is no true, proper Christian religion in the Old Testament at all.

But see the Doctor on Ezekiel iii., and such places. Here he makes the prophet teach the purest, fullest, and most thorough Christianity, in all its parts, and in all its depths. Read him on Ezek. xviii., and you will see Christianity as deep, and full, and complete, as you may look for it in any part of the New Testament. Here the doctrine of eternal salvation, of eternal condemnation, of eternal life, and eter-

nal death, and the reasons upon which all are founded—as taught by Moses and the prophets, and Christ and the apostles—are fully and forcibly stated. Read him also on Luke xvi. 31. Here he urges and elaborates the full “*sufficiency and perfection*” of the writings of Moses and the prophets; and he understands Luke to teach that the man who is not saved through the instrumentality of the things alluded to as taught in the Old Testament, cannot be saved at all. And this is, beyond question, the true teaching of Luke. Dr. Clarke has also a sermon on that subject, most forcibly elaborating the same doctrine.

Burkitt—Notes on Hebrews viii. 7—says of the “*fault*” spoken of therein: “By which we are not to understand any sinful fault, but defectiveness and imperfection only.” He is mistaken still. “Defectiveness and imperfection” are not to be predicated of the words or works of the Almighty. In interpreting Scripture, or indeed any thing else, we must be careful not to violate settled principles. We must find some other explication.

The word *fault* is perhaps not very well selected. As we commonly use it, it does not very accurately define the apostle’s meaning. The word, however, has a good deal of latitude of definition, and when first used in this place, had more than it has now. The idea intended to be conveyed by the word is, that before the visible appearance of Christ, religious teachers could not, and therefore did not, point to the visible, historic death and resurrection of Christ as those did afterward. They taught—so far as they taught correctly—an atonement prospective, as to our senses, but as real, as when made visible to us.

But this shortness, or lack of reach—a point particularly to be noted—is not in the thing taught, nor in the manner of teaching, but in the capacity of the human mind, and the circumstances of man, to receive the teaching. After

Christ's visible life and death, this was very much greater than previously.

Some would teach us that God entered into a compact with man, in which salvation was offered him on conditions which were impracticable; and that after the coming and work of Christ, he made with him a different Covenant, or compact. God had now become more benevolent and merciful, and so offered him salvation on much easier conditions than those formerly stipulated.

I do not so understand it. In the first place, there is no such Covenant as is supposed. Man is not an original contracting party at all. Salvation is wholly *ex parte*. Religion is *grace*. It is the free and undeserved grace of God. Religion is a Covenant in the sense that it is offered upon certain conditions; it is a Covenant then only in respect to those who accept the amnesty, and comply with the conditions.

Now, this precise offer of mercy, on the same conditions—the conditions of the gospel—was made not only at different historic periods, but in very different states of the world, with respect to man's knowledge of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, which lies at the foundation of the whole. Before the manifestation of Christ—but certainly not before his being—before the visible transactions of the atonement had been seen, the atonement in all its vital bearings *could* be presented to the human understanding in but a partial, adumbrant, and indirect way. It was as full, complete, and as "faultless" as the nature of things admitted; and *in itself* it was not in the slightest degree faulty, but was absolutely complete and perfect. Christ could not appear before his appearance; and hence the different modes of teaching before and after his appearance. God was as merciful and benevolent four thousand years ago as he was two thousand years ago, or is now, or ever will be.

CHAPTER LXII.

CONCERNING THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION:—OF WHAT SORT OF ECCLESIASTICAL MASONRY WAS IT BUILT? AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE? AND HOW AND WHY WAS IT REMOVED?

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”

There has been a good deal of disputation among critics as to the proper understanding of this clause in the Epistle to the Ephesians. By many it is held that the *middle wall of partition* consisted in the mutual enmity subsisting between the Jews and the Gentiles, which enmity several authors go on to say was caused by the religious ceremonies of the Jews, and which the Gentiles despised and would not submit to; and that Christ by his sufferings and death abolished this law, thus removing this wall of ceremonies; and that now the two parties come together in one Church, and embrace the gospel as the new and pure religion.

Many, however, understand the wall as separating, not between Jews and Gentiles, but between both Jews and Gentiles on the one hand, and God on the other.

Doddridge seems to include both ideas. He paraphrases thus:

“For he is the procurer of our peace, who hath recon-

ciled us, whether Jews or Gentiles, to God and to each other, and hath so incorporated us into one Church, that it may be properly said he hath made both one, as to an interest in the favor of God, and in the privileges of his people; and that no difference might remain between us, *he hath thrown down the middle wall of separation* which divided us from each other."

Burkitt understands that the breaking down of the wall reconciled the bitter enmity existing between Jews and Gentiles, and made them "one Church." Dr. Clarke uses nearly the same language, as do also Olshausen, Dick, Benson, and a few others.

Macknight paraphrases as follows: "For he is the author of our good agreement; who, by dying for the Gentiles as well as the Jews, hath made both one people of God, and hath broken down the law of Moses, by which, as the middle wall of separation in the temple, the Jews were fenced in as the people of God, and all others were excluded from that honor." And he farther says, "For the worship of God being limited by Moses to the temple at Jerusalem, the greatest part of the Gentiles could not come to Jerusalem to worship with the Jews."

These remarks of Dr. Macknight are alarming—alarming because of their plain contradiction of well settled historic truth. No, sir; nobody was ever "excluded" from the Church.

The Jews were never "fenced in," but on the contrary, it was always the privilege of anybody and everybody to come into the Jewish Church; and, then as now, the only condition of doing so, was to acknowledge God and his revealed religion, submit to his laws of grace and mercy, and be saved on the terms of the gospel. This was always the rule.

By this middle wall, thus broken down, I simply under-

stand, first, that the "enmity" of which it consisted was not a hostile feeling between Jews, as such, and Gentiles. It was the same *kind* of enmity you always see entertained by irreligious people against the Church. *Jews*, or *the Jews*, was the common name of the Church; and others hated them and their religion just as men do now, and always did, and for the same reasons. They hated them and their religion because the heart of man is enmity against God. Second, this hatred was more intense then and there than here with us, where all are nominally Christians. Those out of the Church opposed religion out and out. The Jews, they said, worshiped a Saviour not yet born—not yet in being. This religion was stark "foolishness." And seeing they had not the Scriptures, these objections, in their various forms, were very rigid and very intense. But the simple doing, openly before the world, of the things which Christ did, vindicated to a great extent in their eyes the wisdom and truth of these religious professions and truths. This or that of mere Church ceremonies, had little or nothing to do with it. The objection to religious ceremonies then was the same it is now.

The actual presence of Christ in a populous country, himself identified with the Church, the wonderful miracles he publicly performed, all crowned by a public and palpable resurrection from the dead, and strange ascension out of sight—these things demonstrated in the minds of the more sober and candid the truth of the religion of the Church, and so broke down the strong *wall* of their prejudices. It did not remove their objections to religion, except with some, as everybody well knows, for they continued to exist, and do exist to this day, but in a more mild and approachable form.

The mere judicial repeal of a Church rule of worship would have had no imaginable effect in the premises. How

could that "reconcile us, whether Jews or Gentiles, to God and to each other?" Our Lord addressed *to the eye* of man the great religious doctrines which previously could only be spoken of hypothetically. These things constitute the great practical work which Christ did.

Dr. Macknight's remark above, that "the worship of God being limited by Moses to the temple at Jerusalem, the greater part of the Gentiles could not come to Jerusalem to worship with the Jews," is strange indeed. And so he reasons, this difficulty being removed, the Gentiles became reconciled to the Church.

To this I reply—First. The worship of God was never thus limited. Where is to be found one particle of evidence to support the assertion? Secondly. The Church recognized no such limitation. For six or seven hundred years not one-hundredth part of the worship of God by Jews was performed in the temple. It was performed in little churches, erected for the purpose, all over the country. Those who lived in sight of the temple did not worship exclusively in it. There were over four hundred such houses of worship in the city of Jerusalem alone. Moreover—Thirdly. What did these Gentiles know, or care indeed, about the particular rules of the Church? How came they ever to hear of such a man as Moses, or that he made laws? There is not the slightest probability that one in ten thousand ever heard of Moses except such as attended the Jewish worship on the Sabbath, and there heard the Scriptures read. And it is highly presumable that such of them as attended with any regularity, and took much interest in the matter, became Jews by joining the Church.

The great difficulties which then existed as a barrier to a general spread of religion were measurably removed, not surely by the mere repeal of some Church rules, but by the great visible work of Christ, demonstrating in the eyes of

those who had eyes to see, the great truths of revealed religion.

I insist that the people who lived then were natural people—lived, and thought, and acted naturally; and that the very brief historic notices of those times which we have are to be understood naturally

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE RELIGION OF MOSES AND OF CHRIST, OR JUDAISM
AND CHRISTIANITY "CONTRASTED."

UNFORTUNATELY for young readers, and old ones, too, it is too common for some writers and other teachers to contrast, either in express terms, or by fair implication, the religion of Moses with that of Christ—Judaism with Christianity; leaving the impression that they are two distinct, if not opposing, systems of religion.

Dr. Clarke says: "As far as Christ is preferable to Moses, so far does the New Covenant (or New Testament) exceed the Old."

This, like many other expressions of his, places Moses in the same relation to the Old Testament as Christ sustains to the New. But the truth is, that Moses has no such relation to the Old Testament. Christ, and he alone, was the proper author of both, to all intents and purposes, and in the very same sense. He did not write the language of any part of either with his own hand; but he used Moses, and Isaiah, and Luke, and Paul, and others, in the stead of ink and paper, and in the productions of all of both. There is no more propriety in speaking of the religion of Moses than there would be in speaking of the religion of Matthew. All the religion of the Bible, in every sense, and in any shape, is the religion of Christ.

And just in this connection we have a most unfortunate blunder in the Wesleyan Catechism, No. III.:

“Question. What is Christianity?

“Answer. The doctrines, morals, and manner of worship taught by Christ and his apostles, and recorded in the New Testament.

“Question. What is Judaism?

“Answer. The religion and laws of the Jews, a people descended from Abraham. These are contained in the books of the Old Testament.”

This is at least plain; and so the intelligent, unsophisticated youth, who pays strict attention to what he is taught, concludes that we, being Christians and not Jews, do not believe in the Old Testament.

But then we read in the Methodist Discipline as follows: “The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man, being both God and man.”

That is true, but the Catechism is not. The Old Testament religion, and those who follow it, are spoken of and contrasted with Christianity precisely as one would speak of Mormonism or Mohammedanism.

I am well aware, however, that a strained, unnatural hypercriticism might be brought forward in support of the Catechism; but this is a reading which by a plain reader, especially a child, would never be thought of until by additional teaching you unteach what the Catechism teaches. It says that in the New Testament you find the true “doctrines, morals, and manner of worship;” and it is plainly held up in contrast before the eye of the pupil with the Old Testament, which it says contains “the religion and laws of the Jews.” Whereas the plain truth is, that all the *doctrines*, all the *morals*, and even the *manner* of worship too, except

in so far as the two chronological periods render this naturally impracticable, are found in both.

Against the plain and natural doctrine of the Catechism I present the following readings, by which we *prove that Christianity is written in the Old Testament*: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." "And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets." "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and the reproofs of instruction are the way of life." "Have I not written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?" "Sanctify them through thy truth, (the Old Testament,) thy word is truth." "And from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, (the Old Testament,) which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures" (i. e. the Old Testament.) "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." "All Scripture (the Old Testament) is given by inspiration of God, and is (now to every one) profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction (of all errors,) for instruction in righteousness, that (by following these doctrines) the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"—not partially furnished, but *thoroughly*.

I do not see how the Catechism can be defended. If by "Judaism" was meant the erroneous opinions or teachings of Jews, either before, at the time, or since the Christian era, then the reply is, that *that* is not "contained in the books of the Old Testament." And if it means, as it says, "the religion and laws" which are written in the Old Testament, then the reply is that *that* is inspiration—a part of our Christian Bible, and cannot, therefore, be spoken of as outside of Christianity, or different from it. Moreover, Christ and his apostles did not *teach* anew, originally—which

is the natural meaning of the Catechism—either “doctrines,” “morals,” or “manner of worship.” They taught only that which had been already taught.

I would make the Catechism read on this wise :

Question. What is Christianity?

Answer. The true religion, as revealed by Almighty God to mankind, showing our duty to God and man. It is written in the books of the Old and New Testaments.

Question. What is Judaism?

Answer. Judaism proper is substantially the same religion as Christianity, it being all revealed from heaven. But before the coming of Christ religion could not be so clearly revealed or understood as afterward ; and at that time also, all members of the Church were called Jews ; and so in that period religion was called Judaism. This term is also applied, by way rather of censure or reproach, to the false religion of those Jews who are infidels and reject the Saviour.

Bishop Soule contrasts Moses and Christ, or the law and the gospel, in his sermon in *Sermons from the College*, on Heb. v. 9, 10, in the following manner :

“In the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle points out the difference between the law and the gospel, the dispensation of Moses and the dispensation of Jesus Christ, and shows wherein the latter is superior to the former.”

I do not know what distinct idea the Bishop intended to convey by the governing word *superior*, in the above sentence. He could not mean that in God’s great work of human salvation, or any other work of the Almighty, some one part or principle in it had more moral or legal propriety or excellence than some other part. The works of God being *all absolutely perfect*, we cannot say that this or that is *superior* to or better than these or those. Feeble man cannot set himself up as judge among the works and ways of the Infinite. Their moral, legal, and prudential excellence

is all quite beyond his reach ; and if this should seem to be done in an inspired writing, some other explication must be sought for, because that cannot be the true one.

A few words farther on he says : “ Moses, as a servant, was faithful in all his house. Hence, as the Son of God, he has a glory infinitely superior to Moses, and to all angels.”

I think the Bishop entirely mistakes the apostle’s meaning at this point. It could hardly be believed that Paul, or any other person of intelligence, would undertake at that day to prove to a Jew that *Christ* was infinitely superior to Moses in every way. *That* was not only not a mooted question, but it was one of the very first things about religion believed by all Jews of all classes. Paul never saw a Jew who did not hold, as part of his very alphabet of religion, that the Christ was infinitely superior to Moses. Whatever differences there might have been among Jews of that day on other subjects, there was certainly none on this.

Paul was proving to his Hebrew brethren not any superior excellence in *Christ*, but about *Jesus*, the *man* Jesus—who and what he was. Like hundreds of others, the Bishop fails to draw this wide and very important distinction. The great question was about Jesus—was he Christ? Paul held that he was, but many of his brethren denied it. This was the great question. If Moses—compared with Jesus as a mere man—would compare with Infinity ; and if Infinity beamed forth in Jesus, then Jesus must be Christ. The great, and only great, question of those times in the Church was, whether Christ—the Logos, the Emmanuel—did, or did not, appear in the man Jesus.

As to the two different “dispensations” spoken of, it depends much upon the meaning attempted to be put upon that word of a score of meanings. In the sense most likely intended, it is not at all probable that St. Paul ever heard of any such things.

CHAPTER LXIV.

WHAT RELIGION DID MOSES HIMSELF PROFESS AND TEACH?

WE have so much said about the Mosaic dispensation, and the Mosaic religion, that it may not be amiss to raise the direct question, What was the religion of Moses?

And to this question will any man doubt the propriety of the strict categorical answer—*he was a Christian?* Will it be said that he was more or less than a Christian? Did he in any thing fall short of Christianity? Did he in any thing go beyond it? On this precise point we are not left to conjecture. A Christian is one who believes and trusts in Christ as our Saviour.

“Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.” John v. 45.

This accusation, which is supposed might be brought against these erring Jews, was to be found in Moses’s writings. “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?”

Nothing could be plainer than this. Moses’s religion was just right in the estimation of the Saviour.

On this verse Doddridge makes a most excellent remark:

“This is one of the most expressive passages that can be imagined, in which Moses, their great lawgiver, is repre-

sented as looking down with indignation upon the elders who gloried in being the most distinguished of his disciples; and seeing how injuriously they treated Jesus, the great prophet, turning himself to God, with severe accusation against them, and urging his own predictions as an aggravation of their inexcusable infidelity."

"Then they reviled him and said, Thou art his disciple, but we are Moses's disciples." John ix. 28. Here the proud, erring Pharisees scorned discipleship with Christ upon the ground that they were Moses's disciples; and thus they contended that the two religions were different. But we all know that they were wholly wrong in their views. If they had stated the truth, and reasoned correctly, they would have claimed discipleship with Christ on the very ground that they *were* Moses's disciples. Those called Moses's disciples—that is, the followers of the writings of Moses and the other prophets—were Christians. Nothing could be more clearly stated than this is in the closing verses of Luke xvi. It is here stated in very strong language, and by a resistless argument, that there is neither religion nor salvation for man, other than that which is written in the Old Testament. This teaching may be amplified, explained, and enforced, either by inspiration or otherwise, indefinitely, but the same religion, the same terms of salvation remain.

Dr. Doddridge paraphrases Luke xxiv. 27, as follows: "And hereupon, beginning from the writings of Moses, and supporting his discourse with the authority of all the prophets, he interpreted to them in a much clearer light than they had ever seen them in before, the principal things which had been either typified, or were foretold concerning him in all the Scriptures."

This must be the proper understanding of the text. The two disciples were disappointed, dispirited, confounded; but

by simply explaining to them the Scriptures—adding nothing thereto—he set their faith right, while their hearts burned within them.

St. Paul tells us plainly that he taught no religion other than that which he read in the Old Testament. Hear him in Acts xxvi. 22: “Having therefore obtained help from God, I continue unto this day, witnessing unto small and great, *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.*”

And in Acts xxiv. 14, he tells us the same thing: “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.” And in Acts xxviii. 23: “To whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.”

He found all his Christianity in the Old Testament. He proved every thing by Moses and the prophets. He taught nothing that he did not read there, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening, and teaching none other things.

This is very explicit. He found his religion wholly in the Old Testament. His business was to preach and teach it, and it alone. He explained it, enforced it, illustrated it, elaborated it, and none other things. He knew no gospel other than that which he found in *the law of Moses*, and in *the prophets*. The religion of Moses was exactly the religion of the gospel, according to the understanding of St. Paul.

The religion of Moses is also very clearly set forth in Heb. xi. The faith here attributed to Moses was undoubtedly the simple Christian faith, for it expressly says that in

all those matters of faith, he esteemed *the reproach of Christ*, not the mere external acts of sacrificial worship, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. His faith in Christ, and willingness to bear the Christian reproach, gave him that respect for the recompense of reward which caused him to refuse the temporal blessings offered him. The faith of Moses had nothing to do with "promises of secular good," except to reject them, and take the eternal riches of Christ instead.

If this is not Christianity, I know not what Christianity is. St. Paul has given no better evidence of his Christianity than Moses did of his.

CHAPTER LXV.

CONCERNING THE RELATION OF THE LAW, THE PROPHETS,
AND CHRIST.

REVEALED religion may be looked at under the three-fold aspect of the *law*, the *prophets*, and *Christ*. Revelation was made at different times, stretching along through near two thousand years. They were different revelations merely in the sense that they were made at different times, and by a different instrumentality. Properly, it is all one revelation. It comprises and completes one whole system of religion. It has one author, one character, and one end.

The law, properly considered—whether you confine it to the five books of Moses, or whatever other books you consider as comprising it, or whether you confine it more rigidly still to the Ten Commandments—requires perfect obedience. It says, Do those things, and you shall live by them.

But it is the mistake of many to suppose that this rigid law, or “legal dispensation”—as Dr. Dwight calls it—preceded the rule, in the order of time, of saving men by *believing* in Christ. It is an error to suppose that this was the rule in some particular age of the world, and that a less rigid rule was the rule in some other age of the world. The law precedes the prophets and the gospel, not by any means in the order of time, but in the order of sequence.

The rule by which men are saved has not been changed; it is the same now that it was in the days of Abraham, and of Abel. The *law* is the same now that it always was; it required perfect obedience at first, and requires the same now.

But it turns out in the actual history of man—whether you consider perfect obedience impossible or merely impracticable—that it has not happened that any man has actually rendered this obedience. So there has been no salvation in this way, nor need any be looked for. And because of the impracticability of salvation in this way, God provided other means which we call gospel. But this gospel—which provides salvation by faith—was not set up as the rule, at a subsequent chronological period, but at once. It was undoubtedly offered to Abel just as it was to Paul and the men of their respective times, and was accepted by them both in the very same way. Abraham *believed God*, and it was counted to him for righteousness; and so did Enoch, and John, and every other saved man.

The Rev. Dr. Milton Brown, editor of the *Watchman and Evangelist*, in his sermon in *Sermons from the College*, states this relation very briefly and very correctly in one of the divisions of his sermon :

“As the law was designed to secure the highest happiness without sin, so the gospel is fitted to accomplish this design after the introduction of sin.”

That states it precisely; and it is refreshing, amidst so much error as commonly surrounds us at this point, to see so important a truth so lucidly stated. What is called *the law*, is the primary constitution regarding man as he was created; but when sin came into the world, his happiness under this constitution became impracticable; and so the gospel was introduced. But surely it was not introduced eighteen hundred years ago, but when sin rendered it necessary.

The *law*, the *prophets*, and the *gospel*, relate to each other in the order of sequence merely, not in the order of chronological events. So far as periods of time are concerned, they present themselves, in the divine system of salvation now, precisely as they did eighteen hundred or three thousand years ago.

The prophets, in the order of time, occupied a midway position between the giving of the law and Christ. They were merely inspired teachers of religion—*i. e.*, of the gospel. They looked forward through the vista of coming years to see the human personality of Christ; whereas, we look back through the records of history: they taught religion to mankind just as Matthew and John did; not merely to their cotemporaries, but to us. They taught one system of religion, and not two. The *law* and the *gospel* were both before them, forming this one whole system. They saw them separate in a system of sequence, order, and continuance, but not as applying to different periods of the world. This system, thus taught—*verbatim*—is authoritatively presented to us now for our acceptance; and we reject it—as did those in their day—at our peril. If we hear not Moses and the prophets, and are not saved in pursuance of the things they taught, neither would we be persuaded to turn from our sins by any possible means.

Surely the Old Testament prophets were Christian prophets, were they not? Did they prophesy, or teach—call it which you will—any thing else but Christianity? Do we not go to them now in half our sermons to learn Christianity? Surely they were Christian prophets.

“Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” Rom. iii. 20. In view of this declaration, I inquire, What is natural religion? And I answer, that by natural religion we are to understand a system of mere law—divine law—to be obeyed. Is this the religion

of Scripture, or any part of Scripture? If so, then it is a religion of inevitable condemnation. And yet it is written, "Do these things, and thou shalt live by them." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

These admonitions are administered to us not, surely, to tantalize us; not to require of us that which is impracticable; but to show us plainly, that inasmuch as we cannot comply with the natural requirements which rest upon us in virtue of our creatureship, the only possible safety for us is to betake ourselves to the gospel, and avail ourselves of its provisions; these gospel provisions having been made at once, and not, as some seem strangely to suppose, postponed for four thousand years or more.

So that it is not true that the system of law was formerly the rule, and that we are under a milder dispensation now. That is the law now as much as it ever was, and in the same sense it ever was since sin appeared in the world. But *while* it is the law, and perfect obedience is thus inexorably demanded, and for the reasons that man cannot in his crippled condition meet these demands; for this reason the *gospel* comes in with the strict compliance on the principles of vicarious mediation and voluntary atonement: a daysman betwixt us appeared to relieve the difficulty.

Now, *when* did this daysman appear to make reconciliation? Was it in the four-thousandth year of the world? Most assuredly not. It was in the first year of man's degeneracy; or at least, it was before any suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

Right here is the mistake of many who suppose that the dispensation of the law was separated from that of the gospel by a period of years. This is not true. The relief

came immediately—all the relief that ever came, or ever will come. The merciful administration of Christ did not *begin* at the time of the apostles.

The law—peremptory, inexorable, making no terms with transgression—be it said with reverence—is the only kind of law the Almighty could make. Any thing short of that would not be law, and would be inconsistent with divine sovereignty. All law—human or divine—is of this character. Laws forbid what they forbid, and require what they require; but it does not *always* follow, necessarily, that laws for the government of rational beings are certainly executed in their extremity upon transgression. A sense of some sort of reservation, under some possible circumstances, is an instinct of nature at least, if indeed it be not constitutional with the Almighty.

Then why has not every human being suffered? Simply because of the provisions of the gospel—of Christianity. But it would be very unwise to suppose these promises to be hemmed in and circumscribed by chronological periods. The system is based upon the consideration set forth in Rom. viii. 3, 4: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.”

The law is not a system of salvation by revealed religion at all. It is the mere natural religion of obedience to a Creator. The gospel is the only system of salvation there *is*, or is conceivable. Now, did God leave the world four or five thousand years without a possible salvation? Then how can the beginning of the gospel dispensation be dated at the time of Christ’s appearance more than at any other time?

The gospel is in perfect harmony with what is called the

law, and grows out of it. The prophets did not teach what religion *would be* in the future, but what it *was* then. They fully recognized the existence of Christ, and of his atoning work; they spoke in the future of his visible manifestation only. "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Can any thing be plainer than that?

I do not know what Dr. Olshausen means by calling the prophets "*pre-Christians*." If he means simply that they lived in an age of the world anterior to that commonly called Christian, then the quaint expression might perhaps be received as a remark of little or no force of meaning; but if he means to apply it to their religion in an order of time with Christianity, then I object to it as an untrue description thereof. They were Christians fully, or they were not; and if they were not, then I feel little or no interest about their religion. They were the teachers of revealed religion; and beyond the principles which they taught the apostles did not teach—no, not a whit. "*Pre-Christians*," indeed! No, sir; they were Christians exactly in the sense that the apostles were Christians. They stood exactly upon the same ground, and taught precisely the same things. Nay, living as they did, before the apostles, in the order of time they were *the great teachers of the apostles*; and the apostles readily acknowledged themselves the pupils of the prophets, and sat at their feet and learned from their lips, and taught "*none other things*," though in their teachings they greatly amplified, explained, and elaborated those teachings.

CHAPTER LXVI.

MATTHEW V. 17.

“THINK not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Mr. Burkitt says, “The Saviour is here understood to speak of the *Moral Law*, in contradistinction to the *Ceremonial Law*, which he does not mean.” But he gives us neither authority nor reason for such a reading. The Saviour’s language is, *the law and the prophets*. By this expression is generally, if not always meant, the entire religious system as written in the Old Testament.

But let us look at the expression a moment, as Mr. Burkitt and others look at it, for there are many who read it in the same way, and let us see how ridiculous it will appear. A part of the *law*, we are told, prescribes religious *ceremonies*, and a part prescribes moral and religious conduct; and the Saviour meant the latter and not the former. That is, he meant that he did not come for the purpose of destroying—to utterly put an end to—to extirpate the law of morals and religion.

Let us look a moment at the occasion. He was delivering a most noted and memorable discourse on—what subject? On morals and religion. As a high masterpiece, the brief synopsis we have stands far, far away unrivaled by any thing of the sort in human language, inspired or uninspired.

It enters into every practical detail of life; it lays open every chamber of the soul and conscience; it clusters every species of conduct, whether the acts of the hands or the breathings of the soul, and embodies every social, moral, and religious duty. As a summing up of man's whole duty, the production itself is wonderful, and reaches such heights of sublimity as the world has never looked upon before nor since. While its morals are the purest and simplest conceivable, it meets every case of human action, and every impulse of human feeling. It is a catalogue of the highest teachings of inspiration mingled with the authoritative utterances of Almighty God.

And now we are told that, in the midst of such a discourse, on such a subject, one of its distinct declarations was, that he did not come into the world for the purpose of *utterly destroying all rules of human morals!* He did not intend absolutely to abrogate all distinction between right and wrong!

Could any thing be said, in such circumstances, or indeed at any time, more ridiculous? At the very time, and in the midst of the highest strain of teaching, what moral obligation *was*, how it operated and applied to every-day life and to all men, a declaration that he did not intend to annihilate human obligation *in toto*, would, to say the least, have failed to command the respect of the most stupid Pharisees around him. Verily, it is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Such an announcement, in such circumstances, would have been disgraceful to the young, proud Saul of Tarsus.

And in the next place, there are no such two separate and distinct laws, or codes, as is supposed. It has been formerly explained that there were then in the same sense there are now, Church laws pertaining to religious ceremonies, and others pertaining to religious faith and morals. It will not

be pretended by any that all laws respecting religious ceremonies were abolished. This would be notoriously untrue. Indeed, it could not be without abolishing all religion. Then the repeal must have applied to some particular ceremonies, and not to ceremonies in general. And I inquire, what were the particular ones? And where is the specification? There is none.

The simple, well-known truth is, that Church ceremonies have never been precisely the same, in all parts of the Church, at any one time; and in different ages of the world they have varied considerably. At the period of Christ, there was no radical change in this regard. Some few of the Church ceremonies necessarily changed *in form*, though they did by no means cease at the coming of Christ. They necessarily changed in *form*, for the reason that previously they pointed forward to the future coming of Christ: of course this could not be done after he did come; and so, while the thing continued, the form was changed. And besides this, there were other ceremonies which underwent gradual changes: this has been fully explained in previous chapters.

The Saviour says he came to fulfill both the law and the prophets. That is to say, he came to make no radical changes in or about religion, but to teach, to explain, to enforce the existing religion. *And this he did*, as everybody knows; and beyond this he did not do either this or that, with the things written in the Scriptures.

In his elucidation of the word *fulfill*, Dr. Clarke gives a clear insight to this whole expression. Others concur with him. "This word not only signifies to *fulfill*, but also to *teach*; and consequently we may infer that our Lord instructed that the Law and the Prophets were still to be taught or inculcated by him and his disciples. And this he and they have done in the most pointed manner. See the

Gospels and Epistles; and see especially the Sermon on the Mount, the Epistle of James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. And this meaning of the word gives a clear sense to the apostle's words, in Col. i. 25—'*Whereof I am made a minister—to fulfill the word of God;*' that is, to teach the doctrine of God."

This is a most natural and simple view. Now, the Saviour's language means something worthy of him: I came not to destroy, to scatter, to disannul, to ignore these pure and heavenly teachings. I came to set up no new religion, as many of your teachers are trying to make appear, but for the very opposite purpose of teaching, of enforcing, and making plain these very teachings.

Such a mission is worthy of such a personage. To set the law and the prophets in a true light before the world, to give them force, explication, true meaning, was a work worthy a divine hand.

And so St. Paul says, in Rom. iii. 31, "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law." That is the doctrine. We establish the law; we teach what is taught in the law of religion in the Scriptures, and no more. We take up no new doctrines, as we are accused by many who do not understand us. We add nothing, we abate nothing; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Some have understood the Saviour to mean that he came to *fulfill* the predictions in regard to him. Then they were not prophetic predictions. It is true that his coming and work *did* fulfill those predictions; but if he, in doing this or that, had an eye to such fulfillment, then the supposed predictions were no predictions at all, but were mere collusions between the parties. By making special efforts to do so, any one might have met many of the predictions. If these predictions were prophecies, then they were so written

because Christ's conduct was what it was ; but if his conduct was what it was *because* of the predictions, then the prophecies were no prophecies at all.

In his life he certainly did fulfill, carry out, observe, complete, execute, bring about, all the things taught, whether by prediction or otherwise, in the Old Testament. And not only did he do this himself, but so he taught his apostles and followers. And so we find them, firmly and rigidly everywhere, laboring to maintain, to establish, to fulfill the Law and the Prophets.

CHAPTER LXVII.

SOME REMARKS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

A LITTLE careful thought will show us how the misunderstandings and dissensions arose in the Church about the time of the writing of this Epistle, and which are supposed to have given rise to it, or at least to have occasioned, those portions of it which refer to different views existing between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

The means as well as the modes of thinking among thinking men were somewhat different then from what they are now. Now men's minds are trained to thinking almost entirely by reading and study; then there was neither reading nor study, except with the rarest few. A few men do more reading now than the whole Roman Empire did then.

How, then, was systematic thought produced in those ages? How were opinions formed? And on what were they based?

The teaching—what little there was—was oral, didactic, positive. There were no books. Religious literature consisted in the books of the Old Testament almost entirely. Beyond these, however, there were probably in existence a few rolls of writing called *Targums*, which were a sort of paraphrase of the sacred text, intended for the benefit of Jewish scholars, as men who could read were called, and who in the Babylonish captivity had lost the use of the

Hebrew language. And possibly there were some other written rolls of a religious character. Some portions of those queer, antique, anonymous writings, which are singularly enough called *Apocrypha*, are supposed to have existed at that time; but not one man in perhaps ten thousand ever saw one of them. The Scriptures were read only by ministers in Sabbath-day lessons, and in this way the people got some knowledge of them.

It is easy to see, then, that a very few minds moulded and controlled the masses. The Scriptures were subject to wide and uncertain construction. And again, illiterate and unthinking persons are much more under subjection to the laws of *habit* than those who reason more and decide more independently.

And so by comparing these things with those which surround us at present, we may in some degree be prepared to see how the Jews would be likely to become strongly wedded to their religious practices of external worship. Since the Saviour has been actually amongst us, and we have seen his life and death in fact and in history; and since we have had hundreds of years of leisure and favorable opportunity to reason with each other, to instruct each other, to treasure up the best thinking of the wisest men for ages, and cull and prune our thoughts; and since with all other advantages we have the light of inspiration to explain the many things thus taught, it is not difficult for us to distinguish as well as we do—and perhaps that is very bunglingly—in regard to types and antetypes, and to discern in the life, character, death, and resurrection of Christ, the things of which the prophets wrote. We can now see how some of the external modes of worship then practiced should be made to teach, in an irregular, symbolizing kind of way, important truths in religion which could, under such circumstances, be taught in no plainer way. The most dis-

cerning of the men who lived then could have but a very faint idea of the *pre-representing* character of those symbolic teachings. If they could have had, then there would be no necessity for them.

By looking into these things carefully, we shall likely come to the conclusion that it is not at all to be wondered at that many of the earliest followers of Christ should still cling with tenacity to the foreshadowing forms of worship they had been accustomed to from boyhood. The true typical and symbolizing character of these forms could not be expected to be seen and laid aside in a day by every one.

But here is an important point that must not be lost sight of, for it is a vital consideration: *The Scriptures always contemplated that these foreshadowing rites must cease on the coming of Christ.* This is everywhere taught; and though it may not have been well understood *then*, it is nevertheless well understood now, or ought to be. And if any one desires to be cited to these teachings, I point him again to each and every instance of such teaching. If the thing prescribed pointed *forward* to the coming of Christ, then in its very nature it prescribed that that form, at least, must cease on the happening of that event. Any other supposition would make it absurd.

You may call these mistaken Christians by what name you choose; you may call them *Judaizing* Christians. The name is not otherwise objectionable than that it is a misnomer. His error was not *Judaistic* nor *Hebrew*, but the very reverse. His error consisted, not in following, but in departing from, the true meaning of the Scriptures. The objection to him was not that he *did*, but that he did *not*, adhere to the real teachings of the Scriptures.

And this is the character of the reasonings and expostulations of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians. He complained of these persons, not because they did, but be-

cause they did not, hold fast to the true Hebrew teachings. Did St. Paul complain of any one for adhering to the Scriptures? Rather was it not for misunderstanding and departing from them? Or, if it was wrong to adhere strictly to and follow the Old Testament then, how has it become right to do so now?

Olshausen—Vol. III., p. 289—says: “In the law of Moses circumcision was instituted for all times, with the threatening that the uncircumcised should be cut off from the people of God. No prophet had expressly predicted that circumcision was to cease.”

This is a most remarkable statement. “No prophet had expressly predicted that circumcision was to cease.” Yes, he had. Every prophet, and every other writer in the Old Testament—supposing these writings to harmonize—had fixed the limitation of circumcision to the ante-Messianic period; and if there is to be any controversy on this point, it shall not be between Dr. Olshausen and myself, but between him and St. Paul. The apostle so interprets the Old Testament at several different times. I hold it a settled matter in biblical hermeneutics that circumcision *was*, from the first and always, specifically confined to the period before Christ’s coming. There might, perhaps, be difference of opinion between men as to why, or on what principles, this was so—whether because of its bloody, painful, typical, or symbolic character; but that it *was* always so, and was always so understood by St. Paul, and by all who understood the Scriptures *rightly*, is a truth which we learn unmistakably from the New Testament, whether either the Doctor or myself might or might not have sufficient skill to draw it from the Old. I refer the reader to my former argument on this point in Chapter XX.

And it is the more surprising because the same author a few pages afterward—p. 295—says: “The laws of food,

accordingly, from their nature, retained their importance only until by the redemption of Christ, that which occasioned them was overcome. We cannot, therefore, say that they are here *abolished* as something opposed to Christianity, but they only appear like all else, *fulfilled* by the work of redemption."

That is exactly right, and certainly applies equally to all things which naturally pertain to the *ante-Messianic* period of the Church.

A reply to the suggestion that "no prophet had expressly predicted that circumcision was to cease," might be found in the consideration that some things are true—especially natural sequences—which no prophet had expressly predicted. But the truth is, *that every prophet did expressly predict* that circumcision, as a religious rite, could not by possibility extend beyond the sacrifice of Christ. The very writing of the word *circumcision*, with its foreshadowing meaning, is the most express and positive manner in which the thing could be limited to the period anterior to that event. To understand the idea intended to be conveyed in the very verbiage itself, is to understand its strict limitation. An astronomer pre-represents an eclipse; but does he continue to *pre-represent* it when he talks about it afterward?

There is no doubt that these Galatians were guilty of the error of attaching far too much importance to, and of wholly misunderstanding, these obsolete, out-of-date ceremonies. But it is the mistake of those who so teach, to suppose, not only that these ceremonies were ever intended to be used after the death of Christ, but that this external compliance with the ceremonies ever was correctly taught as a condition of salvation. *This never was the Jewish religion.* The very reverse is everywhere taught. Religious ceremonies held the same position in the Church and in religion

then as they do now. Then, as now, obedience to God and faith in Christ were the conditions of salvation, and the ceremonies were the mere instruments of manifesting this obedience and faith.

Nor were these teachings and expostulations—so appropriately and so forcibly administered to the Galatians by St. Paul—any new thing in the Church; the same thing is seen all through the Old Testament teachings. Who will say that this doctrine of backsliding and trusting in mere forms was not exposed by Ezekiel and others, six hundred years before Paul preached?

If the Old Testament teaches a religion of mere formal *action*, and, as Dr. Clarke says, is only temporal, then it is no Bible to me. Revealed religion is, at least, consistent. Any religion *different* from the New Testament cannot be true.

The doctrine in Galatians iii. was always the doctrine. There never was any other religion. Written or unwritten, it *must* be the religion, and the only religion, of man. Let that rule cease to have universal applicability among mankind, either before or after the period of Christ, and I know of no necessity for a Saviour.

These "foolish Galatians" listened to the seductive croakings of backslidden, discontented professors; but it is adding error to error to suppose that their errors leaned *toward* the Old Testament—they lead directly *from* the Old Testament.

We now exhort Christians everywhere to beware of the very dangers which Paul pointed out. We tell them, as did the Psalmist, and Ezekiel, and others, that if they slide from the firm foundation of faith in Christ as our atoning sacrifice, that then they necessarily place themselves in a position where *they* must do the whole law. There are no other conceivable modes of salvation than *perfect obedience*

on one hand, and *faith in Christ* on the other. The former is at least impracticable, and hence a Saviour was provided.

But I presume no man will pretend to say that these doctrines were first taught in the days of St. Paul.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

TIMOTHY'S RELIGION WAS THAT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

TIMOTHY was a young minister of great piety, zeal, and prudence, and one of the most useful men of his time, and was for several years the close friend and companion of Paul. In Acts xvi. 1-3, we have an account of Paul's first acquaintance with him; and from 1 Tim. iv. 14, we learn that he soon after became a minister. Notwithstanding the remark in 1 Tim. iv. 12, it is next to certain that he did not enter the ministry before the age of thirty. He was born then in the lifetime of the Saviour, and probably ten years or more before his public ministry.

Doddridge says: "It is not certain when he was converted to the Christian faith." He is mistaken. Such an event did not happen, in the sense meant by the Doctor, in the lifetime of Timothy. There is no such thing within the range of Christian theology; and if there is to be a question on this point, it shall not be with me, but between the Doctor and St. Paul.

Doddridge then goes on to say: "However this be, when St. Paul came into those parts again he had the satisfaction to find, not only that Timothy continued steadfast in the profession of Christianity, but was in great esteem with the Churches at Lystra and Iconium for his distinguished piety and zeal."

That is all very true, and sufficiently well said ; but the *steadfastness* so warmly commended by the apostle had reference, we are told, not to the new "Christianity" to which Doddridge supposed Timothy needed to be "converted," but to the religion of his mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois, and which they had taught him *out of the Old Testament*.

Let the apostle himself make this matter understood :—
 "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also."—2 Tim. i. 5. "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So it seems the religious faith professed by Timothy, and so broadly endorsed by the apostle, was derived wholly from lessons taught him out of the *Old Testament*. Now I ask Dr. Doddridge, did Timothy need to be "converted" from that faith, the "faith which is in Christ Jesus," to some other faith which he calls "Christianity"? There is no such Christianity known to the theology of Scripture. The "faith" which was in Timothy, and so distinctly commended by Paul, existed in him before Christ began to preach ; it was the same which Paul himself professed. The Old Testament was fully *able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*.

The idea of Doddridge, and alas ! many others, that a pious man, "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," needed to be "converted to Christianity," because he imbibed that faith before the death, or before the

preaching of Christ, is an idea utterly unknown to the theology of Scripture.

If Timothy possessed the sound religious faith "which is in Christ Jesus," and which is so warmly commended by Paul, the same being derived from, no matter what source, or imbibed through, no matter what teachings, then I ask Dr. Doddridge, *To what* did Timothy need conversion? And when he says, "it is not certain when he was converted to the Christian faith," I reply that it is a mistake, for that very thing is certain. Paul says he was converted to, or at least possessed, *the faith which is in Christ Jesus*, when he was yet "*a child*," under the pious teachings of his mother and grandmother, and at least ten or fifteen years before the ministry and death of Christ.

It has been suggested by some, that Timothy must have been converted by the ministry of Paul, for he calls him "my own son in the faith." This is easily reconciled by the very natural supposition that when Paul first found him, though eminently and zealously pious, and believing in Jesus as the Christ, yet he was but a novice in religion. Paul brought him out, and instructed him, and made a man of him, and through his ministry and teachings he became one of the greatest and most useful men of the Church in his day. He might well call him his son in the faith, though he expressly explains that Timothy was converted to the faith of Christ long before Christ's ministry began, and several years before the preaching of John the Baptist, and so long before Paul ever saw him.

Dr. Clarke, on 2 Tim. iii. 15, says: "The apostle is here evidently speaking of the Jewish Scriptures; and he tells us *they are able to make us wise unto salvation*, provided we have faith in Jesus Christ. This is the simple use of the *Old Testament*. No soul of man can be made wise unto salvation by it, but as he refers all to Christ Jesus."

Most assuredly; and the same may be said of the New Testament. But the New Testament not being in existence then, or at least large portions of it, Timothy received his early religious instruction entirely from the Old.

After instructing Timothy (1 Tim. i. 3,) to "teach no other doctrine"—meaning no other than the Old Testament, as he elsewhere tells us (Acts xxvi. 22, xxviii. 23) was his own custom—he goes on to say, in the fifth verse, "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling."

By "the end of the commandment" is undoubtedly meant the aim, scope, design, or teaching of the Old Testament. Its design and end are as high as religious teaching can aim; and those who hold fast to it, and thus maintain their Judaism inviolate, receive high commendation at his hands; while those who "having swerved and turned aside" therefrom, have run into vain jangling, etc.

And here I do not scruple to say, that Dr. Clarke is clearly and evidently mistaken when he says, "The apostle appears to allude to the Judaizing teachers, who pretended faith in the gospel, merely that they might have the greater opportunity to bring back to the Mosaic system those who had embraced the doctrine of Christ crucified."

As if the "*Mosaic system*" of religion, and the religion of "*Christ crucified*," were two different and antagonistic things! Whereas Paul and every other divine teacher tell us plainly, and the truth undoubtedly is, that it was, then as now, only by holding firm to the Mosaic system, rightly understood, that any man *could* embrace the doctrine of Christ crucified. Can any man be a Christian and repudiate the Old Testament teachings of religion? I declare it to be not only erroneous, but a most preposterous blunder in theology, which no man can receive openly and knowingly, that to embrace

the New Testament you must repudiate the Old. Not a whit short of this is the error before us. I know of no overstrained hypercriticism that could relieve the difficulty. The *Mosaic system*, the Doctor says, is the theory of religion written in the Old Testament; and the *doctrine of Christ crucified* is written in the New. If the learned Doctor does not mean that, then I can attach no meaning to his words. And if these two things are different and antagonistic, then I ask which one is the true Christian Bible? St. Paul tells us that he adopted the former, as did also his son Timothy.

“The Mosaic system” is undoubtedly right; though the erroneous views of every bungling pretender in theology, such as those instructed and controverted by the apostle, may not be. The system is one thing; mistaken views of it, by Jews or anybody else, in Paul’s time or any other, constitute quite another and different thing. St. Paul firmly maintains the former, and firmly rebukes and sets right such of the latter as chanced to come to his notice.

As I have previously explained, perhaps at length quite sufficient, that these “*Judaizing teachers*,” as these mistaken Jewish Christians are most singularly called, were not trying to bring men back to the Mosaic system—the Old Testament—but were trying to do the very opposite, to bring men back from those Old Testament teachings to their erroneous notions of those teachings, into which they had strayed.

St. Paul was the great leader of Judaizing teachers. See how he enforced these principles upon Timothy. See how he commended them in him; and see how every Christian minister does the same thing now.

Does any Christian minister now repudiate or fail to teach any and every part of the Old Testament—the Mosaic system? If so, which part does he ignore?

CHAPTER LXIX.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews has furnished material for a large amount of criticism. Among the questions discussed are these: To whom was the Epistle written? What occasioned it? Who was its author? And, Is it really an epistle, or a treatise? I do not intend to enter into any of these debates, but will dispatch a remark or two in few words.

"To whom was it written?" What practical question is intended by this inquiry about which so much has been written? It was undoubtedly intended for *publication*, and it was plainly addressed *to the Hebrews*. But publications were not made then as they are now. There was then no printing; there was no multiplication of copies from the original, except with the pen; and that was a very slow process, and vastly expensive, as compared with the present mode of doing the same thing. The first manuscript copy was addressed "To the Hebrews;" and there is certainly nothing either in the superscription or in the body of the letter which gives the slightest indication that its circulation was intended to be restricted to any particular class, to those of any religious opinions, or those residing in any particular locality. The way such things were published in those days, was to have carefully-prepared copies read publicly

to assemblies, congregations, etc. The more interest the people felt in it, the more copies would be prepared, and the more it would be publicly read. But it was intended for the eye of all the world, because it was to be *published*.

As to the *occasion* of the writing of this paper, there would seem to be no room for doubt among those disposed to look plainly and naturally upon a plain subject. The letter was written about A. D. 61 or 62, when Paul was away in Italy, and most probably in Rome. The whole Jewish people were then—and had been for years—greatly excited on the great and all-important question of the Messiahship of Jesus. Multiplied thousands took strong ground on either side; while other multiplied thousands were less zealous, but more or less inclined to this side and to that. *That* is the manifest occasion of this writing. How loudly did this state of things call for such an address from such a man as Paul! And how well calculated was it to strengthen the faithful, to confirm the faith of the feeble, to convince the partially convinced, and to arrest such gainsayers as were still within the reach of reason!

As to the question whether the paper is an *epistle* or a *treatise*, I regard that not more important, and far less logical, than the question—with what kind of ink it was written. It is an *epistle*, or a *letter*; and so is it a *treatise*, or a *lecture*, or an *address*, or *circular*; or it might perhaps be called a *book*, or *pamphlet*, though it was not folded into pages, but was written upon skins and rolled up into portable form. It was a writing made by the great Hebrew scholar and logician, for the benefit of his people.

And in other respects the Epistle to the Hebrews has given rise to much disputation. It is considered mysterious and difficult to understand; and this has caused many scholars to doubt its canonical character; and many have concluded that St. Paul could not have been its author.

But if we look at the argument from the proper point of observation, it seems to me that these difficulties will vanish.

Let us suppose the following propositions—and I presume they will be readily conceded by all Christians :

Suppose that Paul, at or about the time of his conversion, had come to see clearly that in opposing Christianity he had greatly mistaken the truth and the proper meaning of his own religion ; that in opposing the teachings of Christ he was opposing his own religious faith, and was doing violence to his own acknowledged Scriptures ; that they *meant*, on the coming of the Messiah, precisely what Christianity then *was* ; that the tenets of the apostles were precisely what his own religion must be now, supposing Jesus to be the Christ, of which simple fact he was now convinced.

And suppose, too, that he knew himself to be a man of national name and fame among his countrymen, and felt great solicitude for their religious welfare, and was grieved to see so many refusing their own Messiah, in whom they had all believed so long, and to whose appearance among them they had looked forward with so much solicitude ; and that he was also much grieved to see so many who professed Christianity, to misunderstand it so far as not to see that some of the ceremonies proper, and greatly useful in the Church *before* the coming of the Messiah, would be absurd and meaningless afterward.

And suppose, too, that in the providence of God his own labors had been employed in foreign countries almost entirely, and for many years, therefore, he had mingled very little with his own countrymen.

And suppose, also, that the opposers of Christ and his followers founded their opposition wholly upon the belief that Jesus was *not* the Christ ; and that therefore they re-

garded their teachings as a new, and hence a false religion ; that Messiah had not come ; and so to worship Jesus as Messiah, was idolatry ; and therefore, that the reason for rejecting Jesus by so many Jews was, that they falsely and ignorantly believed that the disciples were thus trying to induce them to repudiate the religion of Scripture, and take up a new, and therefore a false religion.

And suppose, farther, that the apostle well knew that it was commonly stated, and believed by many of his brethren, that he had apostatized from the divine Scriptures, and embraced some *other* religion claimed to be better ; and that this belief had shorn him of his influence considerably, among his countrymen, at the same time that it was doing them great injustice and great damage.

And suppose, again, that Paul himself knew that these impressions in regard to him were wholly untrue ; that instead of departing from their ancient religion, he was following it strictly, in doctrine, spirit, letter, and truth.

Now, all these are not only supposable things, but they are all well known, unquestioned, historic truths. And in view of them, I ask, is any thing more natural or reasonable than to conclude that Paul, in his old age, should feel it to be his bounden duty to set himself right before his countrymen in these important things ? He did not care to do this so much on his own account as on theirs ; for he saw that this false position in which some of his countrymen had placed him, was working immense injury to them.

It seems to me, therefore, that if we approach the Epistle to the Hebrews with these simple and manifest truths before us, we can scarcely fail to read it understandingly. Its mysteries will vanish, and its arguments will appear in much greater strength, and both rhetorical and logical beauty, than if we suppose Paul attempting to excuse or justify himself for forsaking his old religion, and taking up

a new one. This latter thing he did not do. He not only did not admit that he had taken up a new religion, or one single new tenet or doctrine of religion, but he contended and explained to the very last that he had not done so.

I appeal to every paragraph in this Epistle, if it does not, at every point, claim and defend the faith once delivered to the saints. From beginning to end the Epistle is an argument in support of the proper and essential IDENTITY of his present faith with the true and properly-understood religion of his fathers and of their Scriptures.

Let the preface of this address announce its character: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers, by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Thus, the book itself, whatever particular arguments it may contain, is consecrated to this very subject; and, as Dr. Belcher very properly remarks, "it passes over early historical events as bearing upon these last ages; and it traces, in all the forms of the Levitical priesthood, the constant reference to the one great, eternal sacrifice for sin."

And then the apostle concludes his reasonings, Heb. viii. 1: "Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an High-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."

Here it is particularly declared that the priesthood then, and now, and always, is one and the same. *Men never were priests*, and never formed any part of a priesthood; they were used as mere instruments *to teach* the one and only priesthood.

To call the former "types" of the latter, does not give the clear idea to the general reader. They were types, it is true, but their more immediate office and use was to *teach*

the true, and only true, doctrine of an atoning priesthood.

Those who find real, veritable, atoning *priests* in the Levitical ritual, find that which is not only untrue, but really absurd. A teaching ritual is one thing—a real priest is another.

CHAPTER LXX.

BARNES'S CARICATURE OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

AT this point it is convenient for me to quote from Mr. Albert Barnes, from his Introduction to his *Notes on Hebrews*. I do so simply because I find the doctrines I wish to refute there stated in a pretty full and sufficiently convenient form. I could quote substantially the same leading sentiments from I know not how many others of equal standing. Indeed, they are not scarce in any of the libraries. He places the "two religions" in open and avowed conflict with each other, and makes Paul prove—it seems to me—the very reverse of what he intended.

"The general purpose of this Epistle is to preserve those to whom it was sent from the danger of apostasy. Their danger on this subject did not arise so much from persecution, as from the circumstances that were fitted to attract them again to the Jewish religion. The temple, it is supposed—and indeed, it is evident—was still standing; the morning and evening sacrifice was still offered; the splendid rites of that imposing religion were still observed; the authority of the law was undisputed; Moses was a lawgiver sent from God, and no one doubted that the Jewish form of religion had been instituted by their forefathers, in conformity with the directions of God; their religion had been founded amidst remarkable manifestations of the Deity, in

flames, and smoke, and thunder; it had been communicated by the ministration of angels; it had on its side and in its favor all the venerableness and sanction of a remote antiquity; and it commended itself by the pomp of its ritual, and by the splendor of its ceremonies. On the other hand, the new form of religion had little or nothing of this to commend it. It was of recent origin; it was founded by the Man of Nazareth, who had been trained up in their own land, and who had been a carpenter, and who had had no extraordinary advantages of education; its rites were few and simple; it had no splendid temple-service; none of the pomp and pageantry, the music and the magnificence of the ancient religion; it had no splendid array of priests in magnificent vestments; and it had not been imparted by the ministry of angels; fishermen were its ministers; and by the body of the nation it was regarded as a schism or heresy that enlisted in its favor only the most humble and lowly of the people. In these circumstances how natural it was for the enemies of the gospel in Judea to contrast the two forms of religion, and how keenly would Christians feel it! All that was said of the antiquity and the divine origin of the Jewish religion they knew and admitted; all that was said of its splendor and magnificence they saw; and all that was said of the humble origin of their own religion they were constrained to admit also. Their danger was not that arising from persecution; it was that of being affected by considerations like these, and of relapsing again into the religion of their fathers, and of apostatizing from the gospel; and it was a danger which beset no other part of the Christian world.

“To meet and counteract this danger was the design of this Epistle. Accordingly the writer contrasts the two religions in all the great points on which the minds of Christians in Judea would be likely to be affected, and shows the supe-

riority of the Christian religion over the Jewish in many respects, and especially in the points that had so much attracted their attention and affected their hearts."

This is all sufficiently beautiful in sound, and rhetorical in flourish. The most it lacks—and that it almost entirely lacks—is historic truth, and correctness of description. This long extract possesses very little of either of these two qualities, and really nothing of either that is important.

The most stringent hypercriticism could not probably raise a doubt as to the meaning of the author's language in the two systems of religion he thus brings in contact. By the *Jewish religion* it undoubtedly means, not the mistaken views of revelation which prevailed with many or few in that age, but the written religion of the Old Testament, as it was, and still is, according to a true and proper construction thereof. And by *Christianity* he means a system of religion taught by Christ and the apostles, supposed to be at least *different* from this.

Now, I utterly deny the existence of any such Christianity. The history not only gives us no intimation of any such new religion, but on the contrary, it does give us unmistakable evidence that the religion preached by Christ and the apostles was wholly and exclusively drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures. I ask Mr. Barnes to point out an item of religious teaching—a doctrine, tenet, or truth, which they did not claim to be provable by the Old Testament writings, and which is not this day seen and read therein. In what did this Christianity consist? I ask him to point out, not an entire religious system, which we are told was then and there set up, but I ask to be cited to one single item of a system—one tenet, one doctrine. And in this I ask what no man can answer.

Mr. Barnes teaches that at that time that which had previously been the true religion—of "divine origin"—the

"ancient religion"—ceased to be the true religion, and in its stead another system was set up, quite different, and highly antagonistic thereto. This is a bold departure from historic truth. There is not one word of history to support it that I know of; but on the contrary, all the history there is, utterly denies such an hypothesis.

He says of the old religion—now extinct—that it "had been founded amidst remarkable manifestations of the Deity, in flames, and smoke, and thunder." Here, too, he is equally mistaken. No such historic fact is dreamed of in the book. The religion which the prophets, and John, and the apostles taught, existed as the divinely-revealed religion, and had proved itself the true religion to thousands, more than two thousand years before Moses saw Mount Sinai.

Mr. Barnes contrasts "the two religions" which he says existed in Palestine in the time of the apostles—the one arrayed in splendor, magnificence, and gorgeous decorations; while the other—"of recent origin"—had almost no rites and no attractions. Here, too, we have abundance of fashionable rhetoric, but are wofully lacking in historic correctness. There were, indeed, two religions, and two Churches, in that day, which were widely separate, and highly hostile to each other; but they were by no means the two which Mr. Barnes sees. The one was the Church of Scripture, the Church of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaiah, Daniel, John, Matthew, Peter, and Paul: this was the Church of Jesus Christ. The other was a deistic Church—"of recent origin"—with a totally new, and totally false religion, which then began to be called, and has ever since been called, a *Jewish Church*. The former of these was the embodiment of "the ancient religion," and is the embodiment of that same revealed religion to-day. Mr. Barnes and myself are members of *that* Church, and profess *that* religion. The latter was then and there originated by those who aposta-

tized from the old Church by rejecting the Christ of it. These two branches having formerly been associated in the same Church, and both now claiming to *be* the true ancient Church, naturally followed the old forms of worship; at least, there was no radical change. For some years they mixed and mingled together in worship, to a considerable extent, in the same congregations. We are informed of this all through the Acts, and in many places in the Epistles. Christ and the apostles worshiped in the temple, and in the synagogues everywhere. It is nowhere intimated that those who believed in Christ made any sudden change in their external modes of worship. As they came to understand it from time to time, more fully, they lopped off those rites which *pre-represented* Christ's coming, because Christ had come. The history abundantly warrants the belief, that one might have attended worship in the same synagogue, or church, on several consecutive Sabbath-days—now the preacher disbelieves in Christ, and argues in favor of his rejection; and now another preacher believes Jesus to be Christ, and argues in favor of that belief. And so in different churches, on the same Sabbath, here you would find a believing preacher, and there a disbelieving preacher; and as the feelings and belief of the people naturally so inclined them, they follow the preaching they prefer; and so, in process of time, you would find them entirely separate. But we read of no radical change in outward form. In this respect there was much more change at the time of the Babylonian captivity than at the time of Christ. There we see the general origin of congregational worship.

Neither is it by any means accurate to say that the Christian religion was founded by the *Man* of Nazareth, who was a carpenter. *Founded* is not the proper word to use. Religion was *revealed*. It existed innate, revealed or unrevealed, and ever consisted in the relation between man as a

sinner and God. There was never a time since this relation existed that Christianity did not exist. Even before the Saviour was promised or revealed, he existed in all his merciful characteristics as a Saviour. A plan of salvation, and man's knowledge of it, are two things. Religion existed four thousand years before the *Man* of Nazareth was born.

And Mr. Barnes is wide of the mark when he tells us that "Christianity had an author more exalted in rank by far than the author of the Jewish system." Why, the man has just told us that the Jewish system had a DIVINE author; and now in the very next paragraph he tells us that Moses was its author!

What are we to understand when we are told that Moses was the *author* of religion as written in the Old Testament? Then why do they not tell us that Matthew or Paul was the author of the New Testament religion?

"And all that was said of the humble origin of their own religion they were constrained to admit also."

No, sir! That is one of the most essentially important things in the whole controversy that they did not admit. This was boldly and ignorantly charged against them by the rejecting Jews; and it was mainly to meet and refute this charge that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written. Most assuredly the whole force of that argument goes to refute the notion of a "recent origin" to Christianity, and to place its origin coëval with the highest antiquity. Will any man now admit that his religion dates back no farther than the days of the apostles? Then what have Christians to do with the Old Testament and *its* religion? What care we about the faith of Abel, the religion of Enoch, the righteousness of Noah, and the sterling piety and high religious intelligence and inspiration of the prophets, and other *Old Testament* worthies, we sometimes speak of, if theirs was a *different* religion from that recommended to us?

Let any man show me that St. Paul professed or taught a religion "of recent origin," and he will cause me to renounce every lesson of his teaching as secular and erroneous.

The danger of Christians in those days, we are told, was of relapsing again into the religion of their fathers; that is, they were in danger of imbibing the religion of the Old Testament, which he says was of divine origin. Well, are not people now in *danger* of falling into the religion of the Old Testament? One-half the sermons I ever heard were arguments exhorting men to do that very thing. I would that our people to-day had the religion of Abel, of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, and of Ezekiel. And if that be apostasy, I can only say, I wish I possessed more of it. I am not afraid of any *divine* religion; I fear only that which is of "recent origin."

We are told that the design of this Epistle was to prevent men from embracing the religion of the Old Testament! What theology! And yet Mr. Barnes himself claims this same Old Testament as an essential part of his Bible! He says also, that St. Paul "contrasts the two religions," and "shows the superiority of the Christian religion over the Jewish in every respect." Yes, he says, in *every* respect.

Well, I can do no less, and perhaps need do no more, than present to Mr. Barnes an alternative, from which I think there is no escape. He either mystifies his subject, conducts his readers whither he himself would not go, and does injustice to himself, or he teaches infidelity. To say nothing of the history and the facts, it is philosophically impossible his teachings can be true. Neither he nor any one else believes them when reduced to practical thought. He wrote as he had seen others write. And the doctrine is assented to by Christians not in plain, practical common

sense, but in a sort of mythical, imaginative, fanciful way. The verbiage is accepted, but the thought is not.

And his *Notes* on the text of this Epistle contain many errors of the same kind. According to him, the religion of the Old Testament is Moses's religion. It is low, feeble, and unsuited to mankind, although it was of divine origin. It was unsubstantial, unsatisfying, a mere shadow got up for an occasion; and of course, those who embraced it had but a miserable, sickly faith, unfit to live with, and certainly unfit to die with.

And then the "new religion" is no better, for it represents the old as possessing all possible religious excellence, and its professors and adherents, many of them, as making up some of the brightest jewels in the Christian constellation. If I believed those teachings, I would discard both the Old and New Testaments, as contradictory, untrue, and unworthy of my confidence.

St. Paul, in Heb. x., is misunderstood. He is comparing the true religion, not as some seem to suppose, with a formerly existing religious system, but with what the old ritual observances would be if still continued. These things interwoven into the texture of worship, when they pre-represented a coming state of the Church, were all right and in place; but to continue them now, the Christ they adumbrated having come, is first, to deprive them of their religious signification; secondly, to virtually deny the coming of Christ; and thirdly, to repudiate the faith of the Church, which, before his coming, looked forward to that great event.

And so he argues that the mere observance of the ritual never had any virtue in it beyond the indication of an obedient disposition. Slain animals never had any sacrificial virtue. The legal observance of these things merely enabled the worshipers to look forward to the great sacrifice, as history enables us to look back.

How a religion of "*divine origin*," "*instituted in conformity with the directions of God*," could cease to be true, and require to be extirpated from the face of the earth, is more than I can conceive. But I am happy in knowing that such an idea exists only in the morbid fancies of theologians, and not in the theology of revelation.

It is perhaps not very remarkable that Mr. Barnes, though a Christian and a biblical scholar, should entertain such wild and contradictory notions as those above. Stranger things have happened. But it is very remarkable that such teachings, in a voluminous work on biblical exposition, should pass current in a Christian country for twenty years. Not many stranger things than that have happened.

CHAPTER LXXI.

FARTHER REMARKS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

A BELIEF in Christ is not more universal, nor considered more necessary to true religious faith among Christians now, than it was in the Church at, and previous to, the birth of the Saviour. In this period it looks back historically to his actual life, work, and death; while in the other the faith looked forward to a future coming; and of course, whenever his appearance should be asserted, then the question of the identity of the individual must be determined. That must necessarily be an open question, to be settled at that time, and at no other.

Now, it was affirmed of the man Jesus, that he was Christ; and it is certain that he was, or he was not. And now, how is a truly pious man to proceed in order to remain firm in the faith of his fathers? Why, obviously, he must first determine as to the truth of the claim to the Messiahship on the part of Jesus; and upon supposition that he was the Christ, no matter how *he* might think about it, he must receive him. If he believe the truth, then he receives Christ according to the ancient faith, according to his personal faith, according to the Scriptures. To reject him, *he being* the Christ, is, of course, to apostatize from the ancient, as well as from the present faith of the Church.

How, then, can Macknight say—*Epistles*, p. 505—that

“the unbelieving Jews were exhorted to forsake the Law of Moses and embrace the gospel”? No man that ever saw the Emerald Hills could be guilty of a greater blunder. Christ Jesus was *the Christ* of the Law of Moses; and in order to embrace the Christ of the Law of Moses, you must *forsake* the Law of Moses! That is exactly the logic.

If Jesus *was* the Christ, then he was the great center, life, and object of faith in the Law of Moses—in all the Old Testament teachings. Then how can you *maintain* this faith but by believing and receiving the Christ of it? And so Jesus *being* the Christ of prophecy, and of ancient promise, Paul stood firm upon these prophecies and promises in receiving him, and he exhorted others to receive him likewise by adhering firmly to the ancient faith; and so he exhorted and explained in this Epistle, that to forsake Christ was to forsake the ancient faith. Paul’s religion was a new religion, if Jesus was not Christ; but if he *was*, then Christianity is true, and Paul stands firmly in the faith of his fathers.

This was most certainly the state of the case between Paul and his unbelieving countrymen. Those who did not receive Christ, of course branded Christianity as a new religion, at war with the Scriptures. And Dr. Macknight strangely admits it! That admission by a Christian is an absurdity!

But this was the state of things with the Hebrew people when Paul addressed to them this circular letter. His object of course was, to reach as far as he could the entire Hebrew people. It was admirably adapted and well timed for all classes and shades of belief. It was the very thing most needed by the firm, decided Christian Hebrew; and it was the very thing most needed by the feeble and the wavering; and the thing most needed by the mistaken Christian Hebrews, who were trying to gear into a post-

Messianic state of the Church such typical forms used in worship as must in the nature of things precede the Messiah's coming; and so also, it was the very thing most needed by the out-and-out opposers of Jesus. The arguments were well fitted to reach them, if any thing could.

Paul never argued to a Hebrew "that *Christ was superior to Moses*." That would have been a very useless argument to address to a Jew. *That* was universally held. It was one of the very first and most central tenets of the universal Jewish faith. The writers who make this mistake, fail to make the very important distinction which then existed in the Jewish mind between *Jesus* and *Christ*. Paul argues the exaltation of Jesus, showing that he possesses the superiority by which *he* is proved to be Christ. Everybody admitted the transcendent superiority of Christ. The question was, Was Jesus the Christ? On this question, which was indeed the only one in issue, he makes the Scriptures the straight-edge by which it is tested, and shows that the man Jesus answers all the descriptions and meets all the characteristics attributed to Christ. Hear him: "Seeing then that we have a great High-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, *let us hold fast our profession*." This holding fast to the old profession does not look like a "new religion." And that he means the old profession written in the Scriptures, is evident. And again, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

Dr. Ebrard, the continuator of Olshausen's Commentary, says, on Heb. viii. 10, that the death of Christ "was a perfect sacrifice, once offered in opposition to the Old Testament animal sacrifices." Then there are two systems of *sacrifice* in revealed religion: that in the New Testament is set up in *opposition* to that taught in the Old. Will this view bear the test of examination?

The real and true system of "Old Testament animal sacrifices" is seen to-day in Christian worship, in every minutia of its detail, as fully as it was or could be when these sacrifices were practiced; and indeed, no one will question, that it is far better understood now than it could have been before Christ. But how well anybody understood the true intent and meaning of these sacrifices then, is not now the question. We have to do only with them as they really were and are. What tenet of religious faith were they really and truly intended to inculcate? Do they teach one faith, and the New Testament system of sacrifice another in opposition thereto? Then, I ask, which one is true religion, and which is false? Two systems of religious faith, in "*opposition*" to each other, cannot both be true.

The simple truth is, there never were two scriptural doctrines of sacrificial atonement. There was never but one. Scriptural theology knows but one.

The bleeding animal was nothing but an *instrument* used for the purpose of teaching, beforehand, the sacrifice for sin made by the Son of God. You might as well call a black-board, mathematics, as to call a slaughtered animal an atonement for sin. They are both instruments, and nothing more. The one is used to assist in teaching mathematics, and the other in teaching the Christian doctrine of Christ's atonement by sacrifice before that sacrifice was *seen*.

This was always the case, and was always so taught in all the Scriptures. It is not true that the thing came to be different in the days of Paul from what it was in the days of Moses. The animal was not continued to be used in the days of Paul as an instrument of teaching, because the *reasons* for its use did not then exist.

And to refer again to the illustration just used: The man in the practice of mathematical pursuits does not now use the black-board, but he has laid it aside, not surely because

he has discovered it to be wrong in principle, but because the reasons for its use no longer exist.

There is not now, nor was there ever taught in any part of revelation, any other doctrine of sacrifice for sin than the voluntary death of Jesus Christ. Abel taught it; Noah taught it; and so did Abraham, and Moses, and Isaiah, and Christ, and Paul. But some of these men lived and taught *before* the period of Christ's actual offering. Now, how could they teach the doctrine? In no other way than by representing the thing by some figure or mode *before* it happened; and to do this, they used such instrumentality as was deemed most apt and befitting.

The animal sacrifice never had virtue in it or about it; nor was such doctrine ever taught by any who understood the Scriptures aright—certainly the Old Testament never so taught. But inasmuch as the real cross and sacrificial victim could not be presented to the Church *before* the appearance, as it is to us now, the same idea, the same doctrine, the same thing, had to be presented in some other way. And how could this be done? I know of no other way than by some naturally significant and appropriate emblem, sign, type, prefigurement, or symbol; something which would represent the true idea as plainly as it could be represented, under the circumstances, to a rude, unlettered people.

And moreover, it is well known that in those ages, there being a great lack of the use of letters, as compared with the present, symbolical representation was used very much, by all classes of teachers, in the inculcation of such lessons and doctrines as were taught. In these ages we have measurably laid those instruments aside, because we have better ones.

But while all this is true, it is also abundantly true, that the Jewish people in early times, and even down to the time of Christ, many of them, had but a feeble and imperfect

knowledge of this great doctrine of atonement, thus symbolically and emblematically taught. Indeed, it is quite probable, if not certain, that in these times no one understood it as well as it is understood now; and so we might readily suppose that many Jews so far misunderstood their own Scripture teachings, as to suppose that great meritorious importance attached to the animal itself. They saw in twilight; and if they lived up to the light they had, they were Christians.

Paul understood the matter perfectly, whether the ignorant masses, or the scholastic Pharisees as ignorant in religion as they, did or did not; and so, when Dr. Ebrard says, as above, that Paul, in the Hebrews, taught a doctrine of sacrifice in "opposition to the Old Testament animal sacrifices," he states what cannot be true. Paul taught in accordance with the Old Testament, but in opposition to its misconstructions. If Paul taught in opposition to any thing in the Old Testament, then I want to know from Dr. Ebrard which one is right; because I want to disbelieve and repudiate the one that is wrong.

But the truth is, Paul taught in "opposition" only to those who misunderstood and mistaught the Old Testament, in order to induce them to conform to the Scriptures; but not, as we are strangely told, to prevent them from doing so.

If Christ or the apostles did or taught any thing in opposition to animal sacrifices as they are taught in the Scriptures, why do not we do the same thing? On the contrary, we preach and teach those things now *as the Old Testament teachers taught then*, but not as many misunderstood them. It is well known that in the days of the prophets many misunderstood those teachings; attaching the importance to the instrument which was due to the lesson. And it is well known that the prophets corrected these errors as far as they could, and thus explained the

teachings on these subjects. See Isaiah i. 11, Jer. vi. 20, etc., Hos. vi. 6, Amos v. 22, Mic. vi. 6, etc., and other places in Psalms, Proverbs, etc.

There is no opposition in the New Testament to these Old Testament doctrines and teachings. The opposition found there is, on the contrary, exclusively to a *misunderstanding* of these Old Testament lessons.

If Paul were to write another Epistle to the Church now, he would controvert and instruct such teachers as Dr. Ebrard and others in the same way he did those in his day who inculcated the same errors.

CHAPTER LXXII.

WAS JESUS CHRIST THE FOUNDER OF A SYSTEM OF RELIGION?

JESUS CHRIST is frequently spoken of as the Founder of Christianity, and there is certainly a very important sense in which this is most eminently true; but this is not the sense generally intended and understood. Christ, as God, the great Jehovah, is the Founder and Maker of religion, and of every thing else that is true. But in this sense there was no origination of a religious system, nor of any part of a religious system, eighteen hundred years ago. Christ in his humanity, or in the days of his humanity, did most certainly not found a religion.

If religion was founded eighteen hundred years ago, under what conditions of salvation were men saved previously?

That there are two systems of religion, or two religions, both true, is a clear impossibility, for the reason, several times previously stated, that *religion* is the relation which does truly subsist between God and man; and the practice of this religion is the observance or fulfilling of that relation on the part of man.

Not only did not Jesus Christ found *a religion*, or "our religion," a system of religion as a whole, in the period of his advent, but I go much farther and deny that he then

made any change, or introduced any new doctrine or article of faith into the religion which he found then existing and specifically written in the Old Testament.

If any man doubts this, he can satisfy himself by his failure, after sufficient trial, to discover any such new religious doctrine.

The idea that religion, previously to the coming of Christ, was *confined* to some particular people, and that afterward it was adapted to, and was free for all mankind, is a deviation from simple historic truth which has been previously explained.

The belief of many that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are new to religion, since the time of Christ, deserves perhaps but few additional words of explanation.

There are naturally and necessarily two sacraments, nor can there be any others, nor can religion exist without these two. They belong necessarily to religion in all times, because religion has the two aspects to which they relate.

In the first place, religion has to do with the individual man, directly, as between himself and God. The man owes direct and immediate allegiance to God, irrespective of other persons. This allegiance must not only *exist*, but man's natural waywardness is such, that in order that it may continue to exist, and produce the best effects upon his life and feelings, it is necessary that it be manifested, publicly solemnized, and made patent by some formal test or outward act declarative of the loyalty and fealty, that the sense of personal obligation may be kept fresh and vigorous in the soul.

Here then mainly is the necessity for the *Sacrament of Remembrance*. "Do this in remembrance of me"—that is, continue to repeat this formal promise of personal fealty to God in Christ, that it be kept fresh and vigorous in the

memory, that the obligation be felt in its greatest force every day. Hence the Lord's Supper, as with sufficient appropriateness it is generally called. And hence we submit to it, not once in life merely, but repeatedly from time to time.

If the memory of man were not defective, and if, in practical life, there were none of the thousands of streams of deleterious influence acting upon him which we see, and which tend so powerfully to carry him away by little and little from God, there would be no necessity for its repetition. Once would suffice. It answers the natural requirements by its frequent repetition.

In the second place, religion has not only to do with individual men subjectively, but with the *community-state* of men. A man is not only an individual, but he is a member of society, an integral part of the community. A very large portion of man's character is made up of his *social* ingredients and aspects. We are constantly acting upon others, and at the same time are being acted upon by others. No man lives or acts independently. What we will do depends much upon what others will do. And so, interchangeably, all through society, what others will do depends much upon what we shall do. Hence the necessity of an open *profession* of religion. If there were but one or two men to be religious, a Church or a profession of religion might not be necessary.

Now this community-state, or Church-state of religion, requires a sacramental obligation corresponding to its nature. Suppose a community with many religious persons in it, but with no outward act or test, personal to religious people, marking the distinction between religious and irreligious persons. None can fail to see the great advantage to religion derived from the mere personal token, mark, or indication of religion, publicly made, and which distinguishes Christians from other persons.

And hence the necessity and advantage of the setting apart, the designation of Christians to a holy life and calling which we signify in Baptism.

Now, nature does not indicate particularly what instrumentality shall be used in the outward performance of these obligations or sacraments, any more than in any other obligations or promises. The instrumental forms used before the coming of Messiah, as we now plainly see, were wonderfully apposite, fitting, and useful.

The Sacrament of Remembrance was coupled with the *remembrance* of a most wonderful and visible deliverance, while it taught in most beautiful symbol the great deliverance by Christ. And the Sacrament of *Designation*, too, in that period of the Church, has such instrumental forms thrown around it as make it wonderfully fitting and useful.

These sacraments continue through all periods, because religion continues. The *instrumental forms* in which the sacramental obligations were administered before Christ, being of a forward-reaching, or adumbrant character, teaching the *coming* of Messiah, must of course cease to be used on the occurrence of that event; but the sacraments themselves continue necessarily and uninterruptedly. Since that time, the sacraments respectively are known in common parlance by the new instruments chosen and adopted by our Lord to be thereafter used in the administration of them. So we call the one the *Lord's Supper*, or the *Eucharist*, and the other *Baptism*. And so, in respect to the sacraments, no changes whatever in religion were made at the time of Christ.

Very naturally it is seen, therefore, that the *names* these sacraments have acquired, are taken not from any literal significancy in them, but incidentally from the modes of administering them. *Circumcision* means *cutting all round*, which in itself has no more religious or sacramental sig-

nificancy than *passover* has. But any one can see at a glance how natural it was for the sacraments to take on these names in that period of the Church.

But when the time arrived to which the bloody and painful *cutting round*, and the great deliverance by *passing over* pointed, these forms of administering the sacraments could go no farther, and other forms must needs be substituted. And so we now call the same sacraments, as was formerly done, by the *modes* of administering them. And so *religious washing*, or Baptism, is the name of the one, and *sacred*, or *religious supper*, or Lord's Supper, the name of the other.

How natural and simple these things are when once understood !

Some persons think they read of a new religion, partially or wholly, when they read of a "new commandment," in John xiii. 34. The language is: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." This is certainly not new to religion, for love to the brethren must be essential to all religion ; and, moreover, it is taught all over the Old Testament. But it was new *to them*, the persons to whom he spake, or some of them, because they had so perverted and misread their own religion. And in 1 John ii. 7, 8, we read of a "new commandment," and that there is "no new commandment," evidently meaning that the teaching was old in religion, but new to them, because of their ignorance.

New religious tenets are out of the question at any time, by any authority, or in any circumstances. Religion is only *revealed*. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Conditions of salvation cannot be changed. They grow out of the relation between God and man naturally.

And this is very fully explained by Christ himself in his personal teachings: "Do not think that I will accuse you

to the Father ; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust ; for had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" John v. 45-47.

This is very plain, and cannot well be mistaken. He tells the Jews, his brethren, that the religion which he teaches is precisely that which Moses wrote—that is, that which is contained in the Old Testament. If they will but believe the one, they will necessarily believe the other. It was needless, he says, that they be accused or condemned for rejecting *his* teachings, for this is already done in that they are guilty of rejecting the teachings of Moses, in whom they pretend to trust. The rejection of the one is the rejection of the other. And although they claimed to follow Moses, that amounted to nothing: they did not follow him, and the proof of it was that they did not follow Christ.

Henry's Commentary tells us that the Church which Christ "founded," as set forth in Acts, was "vastly different from the Jewish Church, and erected on its ruins."

That is sufficiently plain and sufficiently unreasonable, and has been sufficiently refuted already. It rests upon mere fancy, without one word of history either to prove it or create for it a reasonable probability.

Bloomfield says, "The Jewish religion is like Hagar, the mother of slaves; the Christian religion is like Sarah, the mother of a free posterity."

Men are naturally carried into such fancies by following a line of divergence from truth when once unconsciously adopted.

And Scott, in his Commentary, tells us of the "most extraordinary revolution that ever took place in the moral and religious state of the world."

It was no *revolution* at all. Dr. Scott mistakes the whole thing. It was the most extraordinary *teaching* and *revela-*

tion of truth that ever took place, and by which the Church was greatly instructed in the principles and truths of its own previously recorded religion.

I acknowledge that the authors are mostly against me. Just in this particular channel I could quote from more than a score more, whose names I have not mentioned, all telling us of *two different and opposing religions*—that true religion did not exist among men until Christ *founded* it, eighteen hundred years ago. But I contend that the errors, when once pointed out, are palpable, and cannot admit of question when once fairly understood. So I do not pretend or undertake to make any argument on the points I raise, or debate any questions with the authors. All I find necessary to do, and all I undertake to do, is to point out the errors. Once seen, they cannot be believed. The authors themselves would be the last to believe them. But the multitude who have not the time, and in many cases not the ability, to examine into the correctness of the authors, are bewildered by such teachings.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON A FEW THINGS IN THE EPISTLE
TO THE ROMANS.

AT the time of Christ—as has been previously explained—the Jewish religion, as it is frequently called—that is, the revealed religion of the Church—or Judaism, as it is also frequently called—was written, word for word. It had been written for hundreds of years, and the writing has been carefully preserved to the present time. Every man has it, or ought to have it, and can read it at his leisure. Moreover, it is the duty of all men, not only to read and study it, but to adopt and drink in its spirit, that his soul and actions may be moved thereby.

But it was clearly possible then, as at all other times, for the religion of the Church, though thus written and fixed, to be misconstrued, neglected, and misunderstood, by few or by many. There have been periods in the history of the Church when the larger portion of its members misunderstood, and so practically departed from, the religion they nominally professed. Three hundred and fifty years ago almost the entire Church had thus practically departed from its religion, and, as everybody knows, was seen running after various religious errors. Still, Christianity was the same then it was when the apostles preached it, and the same it is now.

Indeed, there has never been a time in the history of the Church but many errors of this sort might be pointed to, even in the hands of some of those who were among its appointed teachers.

This state of things existed to a considerable extent when Jesus presented himself as Messiah. And it is true also, that these errors were very prevalent among the officers of the Church, and teachers of religion. But these errors are one thing—the religion of the Church is another and different thing.

And now, it is indeed remarkable, that writers on the state of the Church and condition of religion in those times, confound these two things, and seem to speak of them indifferently and interchangeably. Indeed, they oftentimes speak of “the Jewish religion,” of the “Mosaic system,” of “Judaism,” and other names by which the religion of the Church is frequently called, when they probably, and sometimes evidently, mean only the religious *errors* which some, or many, in those days, had ignorantly and surreptitiously foisted upon the religion of revelation, by misconstruing its teachings.

And these failures to discriminate between these two different and opposite things, have led themselves and their numerous readers into many other errors of both a logical and practical kind. They unconsciously led to the doctrine, and the oft-repeated supposition, and even declaration, in various forms of expression, that the religion itself was defective, was only half-made, and was therefore repudiated by Christ and the apostles, and *another* and *better* religion was set up in its stead.

Dr. Clarke, in his Preface to *Notes on Romans*, has this paragraph: “He (St. Paul) treats his countrymen—the Jews—with great caution and tenderness. He has a natural affection for them; was very desirous of winning them over

to the gospel; he knew that their passions and prejudices were very strong for their own constitution."

Here are two errors which may be said to be dangerous. Jews, as such, needed no *winning over* to the gospel. Those who were religious stood related to the gospel—that is, to true religion—in the same way that religious men do now, and always have done. If they were pious people, converted people, no matter when they were converted, whether before the birth of Christ or afterward, Paul had no need to win them *over* to any thing. All he could have desired of them was to stand firm in their present faith, as we exhort men now. If unconverted, they needed to be converted; that is, converted to a firm belief and practice of true religion. They needed this just as men did twenty, fifty, or a hundred years before, and just as men do now, and for the same reasons; not because they were Jews, but because they were sinners.

If by the words, "their own constitution," he does not mean the written Old Testament Scriptures, I cannot see what he does mean. And that their feelings *in favor* of this should be set down, as it is, against them, is marvelous indeed. They were so strongly wedded to the Scriptures, that Paul had to use great arguments to induce them to renounce the word of God, and embrace a better religion.

If that is not the teaching of Dr. Clarke, then I declare myself fairly unable to determine what his teaching is.

In his remarks at the end of Romans, Dr. Clarke quotes and endorses the following from Dr. Taylor: "Yet the Jews everywhere warmly opposed the preaching of it"—that is, the gospel.

To this I reply *first*, in the language of the Acts of the Apostles, italicizing such words as I wish to direct particular attention to: "And the same day there were added unto them about *three thousand* souls." "And they continuing

daily, with one accord in the temple, and breaking of bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with *all the people.*" "And the Lord *added to the Church daily.*" "Howbeit *many* of them which heard the word of God believed, and the number of the men was about *five thousand.*" "Finding nothing how they might punish them (Peter and John) *because of the people.*" "And the *multitude* of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." "And believers were *the more* added to the Lord, *multitudes*, both men and women." "There came also a *multitude* out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem," etc. "And behold ye have *filled Jerusalem* with your doctrine." "And the word of God *increased*; and the number of disciples *multiplied in Jerusalem greatly.*" "And the *people with one accord* gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that *Samaria had received the word* of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." "And passing through, he preached *in all the cities*, till he came to Cesarea." "And *all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron* saw him, and turned to the Lord." "And it was known through all Joppa; and *many* believed in the Lord."

These, and many other quotations which might be made, of a similar character, particularly before and about the time of the crucifixion, *refer exclusively to Jews.* And later we read, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands—*μυριάδες*, myriads—of Jews there are which believe."

And in the *second* place, I remark, that it is not stated specifically, or with any direct certainty, anywhere in the Scriptures, that any considerable or large numbers of Jews opposed the preaching of the gospel. The Jewish opposition to Christ, the apostles, or the gospel, is never predicated of the *people* in any large numbers, but of the officials.

From all the history of those times we have, in and out of the Scriptures, it would be exceedingly hazardous to say whether a majority of the Jewish people did or did not receive Christ and the gospel most heartily.

The remark of Dr. Taylor is, therefore, most extravagantly wild, having its support in popular prejudice alone, but with none in historic truth, for in the very face of scriptures just quoted, Dr. Taylor says the Jews *everywhere warmly opposed* the preaching of the gospel. A more wholesale falsification of Scripture history could not be made; because it is notorious and unquestionable that at that time nobody either preached or believed the gospel but the very "Jews" named by Dr. Taylor; and at this time they amounted to hundreds of thousands, and no doubt to millions.

It is indeed alarming that such wild and utterly false and extravagant teachings go unrebuked in a Christian country.

In his prefatory remarks to his *Notes* on Romans xi., the Doctor tells us that "this chapter is of the prophetic kind. It was by the spirit of prophecy that the apostle foresaw the rejection of the Jews." And again, "For the Jews are in fact rejected." And repeatedly in other places, he speaks in equally broad and unqualified terms of the "rejection," the "casting away," of *the Jews*.

But from the apostle himself we read: "I say, then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid! For I also am an Israelite, etc. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew."

And when the Doctor comes to comment particularly on the text, it appears that "the rejection is only of the obstinate and disobedient." Verily, that is true, but that is a very different thing from the rejection of *the Jews*. The rejection was precisely the same as is always seen in God's administration, in that age, and in this. Nothing peculiar

occurred at that time, except that St. Paul took occasion to allude to and explain the matter. *The Jews* were certainly not rejected. Such a remark was far more improper than it would be now to say that *the Americans* are rejected. Probably one-half of the Jews were rejected, and perhaps four-fifths of the Americans are rejected. But the former were not rejected as Jews, because they were Jews; neither are the latter rejected because they are Americans. All who are rejected are rejected because, and only because, they are sinners—"obstinate and disobedient sinners."

I see, in the actual facts, no justification in saying that the Jews were rejected, any more than there would be in saying that the Gentiles were rejected. In truth, a far greater proportion of the latter than of the former were rejected. But neither Jews nor Gentiles, as such, were either "called" or "cast away." The simple, practical rules of religion were the same then they are now. These were the conditions of salvation: there was the Church—now choose you this day whom you will serve. The offer of salvation was always made, as it is now, to individual persons, and in no other way. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, *is rich unto all that call upon him.*"

I am therefore unable to see the propriety of such remarks as the following, which are met with so frequently in Dr. Clarke's *Notes* on this Epistle and elsewhere: "If the Jews have broken the everlasting covenant, the Gentiles shall be taken into it." I cannot see that either *Jews or Gentiles*, as such, have broken any covenant, or were taken into any. He frequently speaks of "*the fall of the Jews*," and of "*the calling of the Gentiles*." To such remarks I am unable to attach any practical meaning that will harmonize with the plain history of facts.

Most assuredly the Gentiles were always called; nothing

is more plainly written in the Old Testament, as I have abundantly quoted. They were free to come in and *become Jews*; and there was to be "no difference" between those who were in before, and those who would come in from time to time. It is true, however, as before explained, that at the time of the apostles, by direction of the Saviour, the ministry was made more outgoing and missionary in its labors than previously; though there was no radical change. These facts cannot be denied, either by Dr. Clarke or any one else, for they are patent and notorious.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

CORRECTION OF SOME POPULAR ERRORS RESPECTING THE
SPECIFIC RELATION BETWEEN JEWS AND GENTILES.

FOR reasons growing out of the nature of religion and of man, the Almighty saw fit, in the promulgation of religion, and its permanent establishment in all time in the world, to form a *religious nucleus*; to throw strong religious influences around this concentrated center, and so warm it by divine grace as to cure it of idolatry, and in time cause its religious influence to radiate and leaven the whole lump of mankind.

And the thing was set on foot, beginning in a certain family. The name of the head of this family chanced to be Abram, or Abraham, and he was afterward prophetically or religiously called Israel. This course of instruction could have no sudden termination, but would, at the proper time, and in the proper way, naturally wear off and diffuse itself imperceptibly among the common and riper affairs of life. Nevertheless, certain particular features of it, of a more instrumental kind, might go into disuse at once.

And the plan was, that all along, while Providence was throwing such a column of light on this people, that all the rest of the world—as many as would—were not only permitted, but commanded, to go amongst them and be religi-

ious too. These people, and all who came amongst, and were amalgamated with them, were called after the name of the ancestor of the central stock—Israelites.

In process of time these people had grown to proportions of considerable nationality, and the particular theocratic feature of their government, so necessary in their early history, had now measurably or wholly disappeared, and the nation divided into two separate and distinct nations, the one part still retaining the name of *Israel*, while the other, taking the name of their principal tribe, were called *Jews*. And in process of ages, the *Judah*, or *Jew*, party becoming much more prominent in history and importance than the other, its name measurably absorbed the whole; and such of them as clung together and remained in the Church, were all, after many ages, called Jews in common parlance; though the others, when spoken of separately, were called Samaritans, after the name of the region of country they mostly inhabited, after many years. And at a still later period we find still another branch of the Jewish Church, called Hellenists, or Hellenistic Jews. These lived mostly in Egypt, spoke the Greek language, and had their temple, or central place of worship, at Heliopolis, and became quite numerous.

All the Jews—that is, the Hebrew Jews, the Samaritans, and the Hellenists—had the same religion always, the official versions of the Scriptures held by each, in their respective languages, being almost exactly similar. In later ages, however, at or near the Christian era, some philosophic societies, or schools, assumed to be religious teachers, and some of them greatly perverted the Scriptures, and taught many things the Scriptures did not teach.

By this time, all people professing true religion, of whom we have any extended history, were found among the so-called Jews; and it became the common name of the people

holding the revealed religion ; and so the difference between the two parties—the religious and the irreligious—was very wide and distinct.

These great parties, therefore, came to be known in all religious—that is, in all Jewish history—as, on the one hand, *Jews* ; and on the other, *the nations*—the common term, *nations*, embracing all nations except the Jews. “The Nations” we translate *Gentiles*. So that after the Jews and their religion came to be well established in the world, there was this broad distinction kept up between the professors of the revealed religion, and the heathen or idolatrous nations, or Gentiles. And so away along in comparatively late periods in Jewish history, we have the familiar distinction of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

With these facts before us, what meaning can we attach to the remark of Dr. Clarke, in Romans iv. 16? and what argument can we allow him to draw from it, that “the promise was given to Abraham while he was yet a Gentile”? Abraham was never a Gentile, nor was he ever a Jew. No such distinction was known among men for many ages after Abraham lived. Indeed, Gentile never did mean any thing but a mere general name given by Jews to all people out of the Church, and this was in later periods of their history.

To this it might be replied, that *Gentile*, in common parlance, means all persons other than the lineal children of Jacob. But this cannot be true, for the reason that such a clear distinction did not exist after the settlement of the Israelites in Palestine. From that time to the Christian era, they were distinguished for their religion, without particular reference to birth-origin, and were called Jews or Israelites, until the latter came to be called Samaritans, and the others Hellenists. After the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, the Church no more consisted of the descendants by birth from the patriarchs exclusively ; for both the law and

the practice of the Church was to disciple as many from without as they could. And we cannot doubt that in this period, which was about fifteen hundred years, that the influx was very great.

There is very little said in the Scriptures from which we may draw a satisfactory conclusion as to the proportion of Jews in any particular age, who were pure descendants from Jacob, or of foreign nations, respectively. We know it was the uniform law of the Church to receive all who would come in, and to make no difference between them; and of course, after one or two generations they became amalgamated so that they could not be distinguished.

We see it incidentally mentioned in one place—Est. viii. 17—that “many of the people of the land became Jews.” And we see many prophecies in various places holding out the idea distinctly that the Jewish religion—that is, revealed religion—would embrace and swallow up all nations and people. And the belief of many, that this extension of religious faith over and amongst *the nations* was to be entirely postponed for a thousand years or more, until they would be “called,” is not only entirely gratuitous, without a word of support in Scripture, but it violates the whole policy of God’s plan of redeeming grace.

The Jews, like others, were a mixed people; even from the first they were but half-breeds, so far as concerned descent from Jacob; for his sons did not marry their sisters. But in later ages, surely it could be said of not very many that they were one-twentieth part of the blood of Jacob; though at the same time it is true that many high and influential families could trace their lines of genealogy, on the paternal side, back to Jacob.

Jew was the name of the people who held the revealed religion, without exclusive reference to birth-origin.

Great numbers of Jews ceased to be Jews at various

times, in various countries. How? By departing from the religion and fellowship of the Church; and *their* descendants were generally lost sight of so far as "Jews" or the Church was concerned. For instance: most of those carried captive to Babylon, six hundred years before Christ, ceased to belong to the Church, and they and their posterity were never afterward counted or spoken of as Jews, but became mingled and lost in other nationalities. And so we read in *Taylor's Manual of Ancient History*, p. 171:

"When Cyrus—as God had foretold—issued a decree permitting the return of the Jews to their native land, (B. C. 536,) he entrusted the execution of it to Zerubbabel, who was the grandson of the last king of Judah. The number of those who returned appears not to have exceeded fifty thousand persons; and hence the Jewish traditions declare that 'only the bran came out of Babylon, while the flour stayed behind.'"

Josephus states the number who returned from Babylon at forty-two thousand four hundred and sixty-two. (*Antiquities*, Book II., c. 1.)

Kitto's Cyclopaedia, Article Captivity, says: "The great mass of the Israelitish race, nevertheless, remained in dispersion. Previous to the captivity many Israelites had settled in Egypt, (Zech. x. 11, Isa. xix. 18,) and many Jews afterward fled thither from Nebuzaradan (Jer. xli. 17). Others appear to have established themselves in Sheba, where Jewish influence became very powerful."

So it seems that at this time abrasion, absorption, and expatriation, of one kind or another, had reduced the Jewish people to a mere handful—less than fifty thousand; and from this little stock they start again.

And then we read again from *Taylor's Manual*—about B. C. 445—that, "Ptolemy Soter besieged Jerusalem, and stormed it on the Sabbath-day; he carried away one hun-

dred thousand captives;" and in a few centuries they became absorbed by other races.

So that the continued unity of the Jewish people is a myth which largely and repeatedly violates the well-known history of the case.

And now, at the time of the Christian era, a rather singular, though at the same time very natural, transformation took place in the Jewish descent, and in the *names* of parties. The Church split, and divided into two distinct parties: the unbelieving or rejecting Jews left the Church, apostatized, and set up a new religion; and the believing, or Christ party remained firm in the old religion. The outside nations, or Gentiles, were not particularly affected any way by this split in the Church. The apostate Jews, though they wholly renounced Judaism—their former religion—still claimed to be true Jews; that is, the true Church. This claim was based upon a simple hypothetical fact, which, if true, fully entitled them to it, and would have clearly proved the Christian party to be apostates. This great question was, WAS JESUS THE CHRIST? If he was, then it follows that the unbelieving Jews were apostates; and if he was not, then the Christian Jews were apostates. Both parties claimed to be true Jews—the true Church; and we Christians believe that the former were right and the latter wrong; and we see it several times so stated in the New Testament. They said they were Jews, but were not, and did lie. He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, by merely calling himself such; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, who receives Christ, and possesses the Christian religion of Jews.

But when the true Jewish Church came to be called by the name of Christ, there was no one to contend with them as to who should be *called Jews*; and so the false Jews—though by no means entitled to it—clung to the name, and

it has been carried to them to this day. Nobody cared about it.

And so the denominational distinction of *Jew* and *Gentile* became entirely changed in common parlance. Instead of distinguishing between *heathen people* and the *true Church*, it is understood to distinguish between the false, *apostate* *Jews*, on the one hand, and the *true Church and all* on the other.

Names sometimes change, but they never either give or determine the character of things.

From these simple, well-known facts, it is easily seen that the relative names of *Jew* and *Gentile* have an entirely different meaning, since the time of Christ, from what they had before. They distinguish different things; and the failure to notice these facts has given rise to many hurtful errors.

CHAPTER LXV.

CONCERNING THE CIVIL, OR POLITICAL, STATE OF
JEWS, AND WHY AND HOW FAR THAT WAS A PECU^E
LITY OF THAT PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.

It was the divine policy, in order to establish a central religious nucleus in the world, that the Israelites should be, for a long period in their early history, kept in a very isolated and exclusive situation as to other nations; and this made it necessary that their civil affairs should be of a strict, rigid, and peculiar character. And hence we have what we call a THEOCRACY; though of the details, and indeed much of the practical principles of a Theocracy, we know but little. In their earlier history, when an isolated condition was more necessary than it afterward became, their government was patriarchal and very simple; but in process of time their condition became less and less isolated and exclusive, and they took on such forms of government as public sentiment, individual opinion, and surrounding circumstances, seemed to suggest or call for.

The Jewish civil government was by no means always the same, and whatever it was in form from time to time, it was never in any way identical with their religion. Civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction were separate and distinct.

In the Jewish Theocracy, God was the Ruler and Governor. And so he ought to be in all governments; and so he is and must be in all well-regulated governments.

The members of the Church before Christ, being identical with those of the Jewish commonwealth, or Jewish persons being *born into the Church*, is neither quite so much of an invariable fact, nor quite so much of an exclusive peculiarity, as many suppose.

So long as the Jewish *state* remained true to the Old Testament *Church*, the children of Jews were considered members of both. But the Jewish apostasy, about the time of the death of Christ, unfortunately included most of the State officials; and so they carried the *State*, so to speak, with them into the apostasy; so that *their* children—those of the apostates—were not born into the Church; they followed their parents. And likewise the children of the Christian Jews who remained in the Church, followed their parents. They found themselves, by birth, in the Church of their parents; and this rule has not been materially departed from to this day.

All persons have some religion, though some observe much more strictness, and fidelity, and zeal, in their religious tenets and duties than others. The children of Christian parents are known and recognized as Christians everywhere, nominally at least, both by themselves and everybody else; and so we speak of the countries inhabited by these people as *Christendom*. An isolated instance of apostasy is but rarely seen. Most of these persons, however, pay but little attention to the practical duties of their own religious faith. So it was before the time of Christ. They were all nominally Jews, as the people of Christendom are all nominally Christians; understanding by these terms, *Jew* and *Christian*, not different people with different religions, or a different Church, but the same people—descendants of the same—with the same religion and the same Church, but in different periods called by these different names.

It is quite likely, however, though not certain—applying

the remark, as we must in both cases, to very great periods of time, and great variety in manners—that since Christ, more attention has been generally paid to the strict legal difference between practical and nominal professors than previously.

Most of the officials among the Jews at the time of the separation, in the age of the apostles, having gone with the apostates in rejecting Christ, the Jewish *State* was understood to lie in that channel; though probably one full half, or perhaps much more, of the Jewish people, remained in the Church with the apostles, and so were not generally afterward counted with the Jewish nationality. Not long after this, the national Jews, as we might designate them, fell into extensive and disastrous warfare with the Romans, and their nationality finally suffered dismemberment.

But previously to this separation, when they all professed the true religion, the rule which recognized the children of Jews as being Jews in the religious sense, was about the same as that which now recognizes all children of Christians as Christians. In both cases the religion is nominal merely; they were pious only as they became so individually.

But it should be particularly noticed that the separation of the Jews, which had been so fully spoken of in these chapters, was twofold—of two kinds. At the same time that the unbelieving Jews *went out of the Church*, the believing, Christian Jews *went out of the Jewish State*, if their condition might be so called; for it will be noted that their nationality ceased to exist about twenty-seven years before this time.

They were now a mere Roman province. So they were subjects of the Roman government, and were permitted by the government merely to exercise some little matters of jurisdiction, almost if not wholly of a religious kind. It is therefore but very partially true indeed, that the Jews had

any kind of a government at this time. They had but very little more than a Church government.

The great split about religion, therefore, whether Jesus was or was not the Christ, had naturally the effect of working this twofold change. *The unbelieving Jews went out of the Church, because the Church continued the same in the hands of the other party.* And this other party—the Jews who held to Christ—*went out of the Jewish commonwealth, what there was left of it, because all their civil aspects continued the same in the hands of that party.*

So that in civil and political respects, the unbelieving or apostate Jews must thenceforward be regarded as *the Jews*; whilst in all religious and ecclesiastical respects, the believing or Christian Jews must be regarded as *the Jews*.

The Christian Jews did not break off their civil relations with their former associates at once, and by any formal act. And yet we see that the dissociation increased more and more, more and more, and in a comparatively short time became complete.

And when the Jewish rulers, shortly after, revolted against the Roman government, the Christian party, to a man, withheld their hands from it; and the Jews being utterly vanquished and scattered, all civil relation between the two Jewish parties was utterly and for ever lost sight of.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

BLUNDERS OF THEOLOGICAL WRITERS RESPECTING THE
DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND SOME OF ITS CON-
SEQUENCES.

WE are told in the books so frequently that particular citations need scarcely be made, that in the famous war in which Jerusalem was destroyed—about A. D. 72—the Jewish temple was utterly and for ever demolished, and the Jewish State and commonwealth then and there found an end for ever; and that by this disaster the Jews were finally dispersed into all countries, and became a strolling people. The inferences, deductions, and conclusions drawn from these historic blunders, in support of a mythical Christianity unknown to Scripture, are, to say the least, very numerous, as well as abundantly injurious to the Church.

It seems to me that these historic *data*, which we read so readily almost everywhere, are subject to serious criticism. It is not true, in the first place, that the famous temple at Jerusalem was, in the period alluded to, in any proper sense, *the* Jewish temple. Secondly, its destruction, with that of the city, was not the *end* or termination of the Jewish State and commonwealth; nor thirdly, was this famous siege the cause of the *dispersion* of the Jews. Indeed, the whole affair—war, results, and all—had no certain or necessary connection with *the Jews*. As a people wholly, they were not concerned in it.

First. For many years before the birth of our Saviour, the Jewish Church and people had been divided into three denominations, as we would call them, or sects, or separate Churches. First. There was the Hebrew Jews, as they are generally called. These resided mostly in Judea, had the Hebrew text of the Bible, and their place of great festive worship at the temple in Jerusalem. Second. The Samaritan Jews. These—those who had not migrated to other countries—lived in Samaria, and had their temple for festive worship on Mount Gerizim. They had the Scriptures in a Syriac dialect, in Phœnician characters. Third. The Hellenistic Jews. These resided mostly in Egypt, and other foreign countries, and had their temple at Heliopolis, in Egypt, and spoke the Greek language. It is among these several denominations that we find our several versions of the Old Testament—the Hebrew, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Greek Septuagint.

Secondly. These several Jewish Churches, or denominations, had little or no social or ecclesiastical intercourse. They generally unchurched each other, each contending that his Scripture version was the true one, and his temple the only true temple. Their several versions of Scripture, however, varied but little, except in ancient chronology, and except that the Samaritan Jews received, as fully inspired, only the writings of Moses. These several Churches or classes of Jews were sometimes at war, and sometimes at peace among themselves. Of their relative numerical strength we have no reliable information. It may, however, be regarded as most probable, that the Hellenists were the most numerous of the three.

Thirdly. Now, what had this war of Vespasian against *Jerusalem*, and the destruction of *that* temple, to do with the Samaritan and Hellenistic portions of the Jews? Nothing whatever. We do not see that they had any concern in it.

Rome made no war upon them. Rome was not making war upon Jews; it was only putting down a rebellion at Jerusalem. And surely the Samaritans or Hellenists would not have assisted, under any circumstances, in defending *that* city, or that temple; neither were they "dispersed," nor otherwise affected by the fall of Jerusalem. The thing did not relate to Jews as such, but only to the revolt at Jerusalem.

Fourthly. As to the Jewish State and commonwealth coming to an end by the fall of Jerusalem, and the burning of the temple there—how could that be? The Jewish *State* had had no existence for about a hundred years before that time. Surely everybody knows that the Jewish civil government in Palestine found its "end" among the ancestors of these people, and by other wars, long before this time. No Jews then living had ever seen any civil *State*, among either the inhabitants of Judea or any other Jews.

Fifthly. This justly famous and terrible destruction of Jerusalem was on this wise: About forty years after the death of Jesus, when the separation between the believing Jews and the faction which revolted from Judaism and apostatized had become complete, wide, and final, the Judean portion of this faction—and which, so far as I know, constituted the whole of it, or most likely nearly all of it—finding "the affairs of the Romans in great disorder"—as Josephus tells us—and being of a "seditious temper," determined to revolt against the government. They rebelled, and entrenched themselves in the city, and after a terrible siege, suffered a most terrible destruction.

And now, to predicate this transaction of *the Jews*, and connect it with "the downfall of the Jewish State," and "the dispersion of this people," is not only a very great and very gross falsification of history, fashionably put forth by theological writers, but it throws a romantic and mythical

air over the Church in those times, which certainly does not belong to it.

These errors are supposed to be needful, in order to show us that in a certain period of the world God dispensed his grace to mankind according to some unknown, unintelligible, and never-explained principles called *Jewish*; and in another period he changed his dispensation so as to let in other principles called *Christian*. And so to keep up the error, there must be an entire separation, and entire distinction, between Jews and Christians, between God's dispensation here and God's dispensation there. Christianity, instead of being the common religion of God, conformable to nature and the divine character, is a happy afterthought, "introduced" by Christ after he assumed the humanity of Jesus; and the Church, instead of being the rational and natural association of religious people, is a new-fangled thing, "instituted" about the same time.

Jews, and every thing *Jewish*, must be carefully and exactly classed away among the things of "the old system," and so the Jewish State must be made to succumb to the opposite principles of Christianity; and the Jewish people must be universally *dispersed*, in order that the new-comers—the Christians—may find a place and a Church in the earth.

I venture to suggest the question whether the religion and the history of the Church ought any longer to be bribed and dragooned into this specious but unnatural support of this mystical and mythical "Christianity"? There is no such Christianity known to revelation.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

STRICTURES ON CONYBEARE AND HOWSON'S "ST. PAUL."

A FEW years since, the Rev. Messrs. Conybeare and Howson brought out in England a somewhat voluminous work with the above title. It is highly spoken of as superior to the commentaries, and as an excellent introduction to the New Testament; but though it undoubtedly has considerable merit in many things, it can scarcely be said to be entirely free from objection.

I make a very few extracts and comments, for the purpose of showing the drift of theological thinking in one particular channel.

On page 31, of Vol. I., they say: "Christianity has been represented by some of the modern Jews as a mere school of Judaism. Instead of opposing it as a system antagonistic and subversive of the Mosaic religion, they speak of it as a phase or development of that religion itself, as simply one of the rich outgrowths from the fertile Jewish soil."

Here we are at no loss for the clear meaning. "Judaism" and "the Mosaic religion" are, I think, very properly spoken of as synonymous—one and the same thing. And the complaint against these modern Jews is, that they claim that the Christianity they oppose is only "a phase or development of the Mosaic religion"—that is, the religion of the Old Testament. Whereas, the authors before us say they

ought, to be fair, to oppose it "as a system antagonistic and subversive of the Mosaic religion." This is plain, at least. Christianity, then, is antagonistic to and subversive of the Old Testament.

Subvert, Webster says, means to overthrow from the foundation—to overturn—to ruin utterly.

The business of the New Testament then, is, to *subvert*—to overthrow from the foundation—to ruin utterly—the religion of the Old Testament; or at least to "antagonize" it, and unceasingly endeavor to ruin it!

And this is printed in handsome octavo, circulated in England, republished in this country, and called theology, and its authors are called doctors of divinity!

Well, I don't understand it. The thing, as printed, holds that the Old Testament ought to be destroyed—ruined utterly. Language could hardly be plainer than they have written it. And yet I can hardly believe the authors so intended. They have been so accustomed to reading that the New Testament and the Old were different and opposing systems of religion, that they probably never stopped to think about it.

On page 79, they say: "The Jews attempted to destroy the gospel." Whereas, the notorious truth is, that *the Jews* built up, at the first, and for about ten or twelve years sustained, solely and exclusively, this very thing he calls the gospel. He calls religion, as preached by the apostles, the gospel. I ask, if up to the time of the preaching to Cornelius, there was a man, woman, or child in the apostolic Church other than such as were rated and commonly called Jews—such as the authors themselves call Jews? Was there a Gentile in it?

On page 105, speaking of Paul, they say: "In his last residence at Tarsus, a few years before, he was a Jew, and not only a Jew, but a Pharisee."

And did he, or how could he, cease to be a Jew? Most assuredly he was born and died a Jew, and he was also a Pharisee from early life. Not long before his death—to set this question at rest, if it needs being put to rest—we hear him expressly and in terms claim to be both a Jew and a Pharisee; and he had then been preaching the gospel more than twenty-five years.

On page 188, the authors speak of “the rabbinical master of the synagogue” as being, of course, an inveterate and unceasing enemy of Christians.

How do they know that whole synagogues, hundreds of them, with their “rabbinical masters” at their head, were not among the first and foremost followers of Christ? It would be strange indeed if it were not so. All the Christians were Jews up to a time when they must have amounted to hundreds of thousands, if not to millions. For a long time they, and they alone, were the friends and followers of Christ. The Saviour was a Rabbi; but whether he filled the office of *Ruler* in the synagogue, we are not informed. But we are repeatedly informed that he frequently—both he and the apostles—served in other regular offices of the synagogue. They frequently did so all their lives. Surely everybody knows this. They were certainly “rabbinical” *officers* of the synagogue, and so acted on very many occasions.

On page 206, the authors think it must have been impossible in those days to conceive “how the Jews and Gentiles could have ever become united in one Church without the enforced obligation of the whole Mosaic law.”

I answer, that “the obligation of the whole Mosaic law” *was* enforced—always was, and is now; or if not, then I inquire which books, which chapters, which paragraphs of it are repudiated?

This brings out the gist of this main blunder about the Mosaic law. The thing was grossly misunderstood by some

then, and is, it seems, as much misunderstood by some now. And yet, looked at properly, the whole matter appears very simple. To take a telescope to look at a thing just before you, is a great disadvantage.

Everybody knows that before the personal coming and visible sacrifice of our Saviour, several of the ceremonies of the Church were typical, forereaching, adumbrant of that event. In their symbolical mode of teaching religious truth, they pointed *forward* as we point backward to the visible sacrifice. This has been fully explained in former chapters. No matter just now how many or how few there were of this sort of Church ceremonies. It is certain that circumcision—that is, the *mode* of administering this sacrament—was one of them, and there were others.

Now, what was the rule of the Old Testament—the Mosaic law, or the Jewish religion, whichever expression any one may prefer—what was the rule respecting the continuance or discontinuance of *these* ceremonies after the coming of Christ? or did the Old Testament prescribe absolutely on the subject?

Why, has it not just been said that they pointed *forward* to that event? Then how could they continue beyond that event but by violating the law of Moses, or the Old Testament? If the Jewish Scriptures prescribed these ceremonies as symbols to point forward to adumbrate the then future coming of Christ, then that is the same as to say that they prescribed that they should cease on the coming of that event; for they could no longer point *forward* to a thing that had happened.

Then the use of circumcision after Christ was a violation of the Mosaic Scriptures most assuredly, and not a conformity to them, as many seem to suppose.

Most assuredly, then, there was an obligation resting on all, then as now, to observe the Old Testament; and the

apostles and others did obey the Mosaic law by discontinuing circumcision and all other rights adumbrant of Christ's death. Those who essayed to continue the adumbrant typical rites, did so in open violation of the plain enactments of the Mosaic law on every page of it.

The authors say: "Pharisaic Christians insisted that the observance of Judaism was necessary to salvation. They said it was absolutely needful to circumcise the new converts, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." That was impossible. Men could not at the same time do two things directly and palpably opposite and contradictory to each other. If they advised them to keep the law of Moses—as they call the Old Testament Scriptures—they advised them to discontinue circumcision. Most assuredly it was the same then as it is now. Suppose we now were to practice circumcision and the other typical ceremonies? We discountenance them because every page of the Old and of the New Testament requires it.

Those mistaken persons in the apostles' days, who misunderstood their Scriptures, and desired to continue the obsolete rite, violated the rules of the Bible as much as we would to-day by doing the same things. Show me that St. Paul violated the Scriptures—any part of them—in his teachings, and he shall no longer be a religious leader for me. The Old Testament confines circumcision absolutely to the ante-Messianic period. To understand them otherwise, would be to deprive them of meaning, and make their language ridiculous.

On page 133, Vol. II., we read that "a portion of the Church had been Jews." And in many other places it is supposed that Christians could not be Jews. This, compared with the well-known history and the naturalness of the thing, is unintelligible.

What did these men do? What act, moral, mental, or

physical, did they perform, by which they ceased to be Jews and became Christians? Can any man answer this question? They now, as Christians, believe in Jesus Christ. Well, was not this always the religion of the Jewish Church? Is there any *religion* in the Old Testament not wholly and essentially based on Christ? Is not Christ the center, foundation, substance, and sum total, of every religious thought, idea, and doctrine in the Old Testament as well as in the New? And now, because they continue the same faith, they have ceased to be what they formerly were, and have *become* something else. This needs explanation, and the explanation needs to be specific. I want to know what faith they renounced; and if that thing was taught between the lids of the Old Testament, then I want to expunge at least that much from my Bible. My religion is Christianity; and I want no book nor teaching which even tolerates any other.

Will any man say that revelation ever offered salvation to anybody on any conditions other than faith in Christ? I see the sagest theologian and the child of six or seven years saved upon the same conditions of faith in Christ; though I discover a vast disparity in the knowledge of Christ, or about Christ, between them. And so I see men grown to years, in periods and countries of very dim twilight, saved by what might be called a very feeble faith. But I see no one saved on any legal terms. And I repeat, that any thing of this kind must be expunged from the Christian Bible, because it is not true.

And I also ask, When, where, and by whom was any thing in the Old Testament renounced by Christians? Can a Christian renounce revelation? Can revealed religion be untrue? To *renounce* religion, is apostasy. To disbelieve revelation, is infidelity.

I suppose I could point out fifty errors of this kind in the work under consideration, *all flowing in the same channel.*

And thus it is that two divines of high literary character, after much labor and research, have produced two good-sized octavos on the life and writings of St. Paul, and the New Testament generally, and have nearly ruined it with the notion, interlaced all through it, of not only an essential difference, but a high antagonism between the Old and New Testaments. It being all Scripture, you might as well suppose an antagonism or difference in religion between the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, or these and those chapters, verses, or books in the New Testament. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine; and if I understand the matter aright, it is all binding on Christians now. But we cannot be governed by any writing until we first understand it. But if it be held that any part of the Old Testament is not binding upon Christians now, then I inquire what portions are to be repudiated? And what are we doing with those portions in our Bible?

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

MUCH of the connected history of the Church we have in the Scriptures, is the treatise we call the *Acts of the Apostles*; but it is by no means pretended that this is a complete history, or even an outline, of the *acts of the apostles*. Most of the apostles are scarcely mentioned at all in the treatise. It contains a considerable outline of the account of the acts of one of the apostles, viz., Paul; and he, it will be remembered, was not one of the twelve. And we have some account of Peter, James, Barnabas, and others.

And we have in Acts a pretty clear account of the great Jewish apostasy, in which a large portion of the Church abandoned their former religion. It is explained how they endeavored to hold fast to the true doctrines of CHRIST, and at the same time repudiate JESUS; and how, in repudiating the one, they necessarily repudiated the other; and how they persisted in that bold heresy to at least their religious ruin.

There is a very clear distinction between a belief of *Christ* and a belief in *Jesus*. We often confound the two things by using the word Christ as the *name* of the Son of God. It is not properly the name of the man, but rather of his office, or of his relation to mankind as our Saviour. The Old Testament is full of Christ, of the doctrine of

Christ, the religion of Christ. There is no religion taught or hinted at in the Old Testament, as true, but that of Christ—that which is Christian. But the man Jesus had not yet been made manifest to human senses. And so in him, as such, there could be neither belief nor disbelief.

Mr. Watson's misapprehension is therefore apparent when he says, "The Christian religion was published by its great author in Judea, a short time before the death of Herod the Great." Most assuredly it was not the Christian *religion* which was then first published. This would repudiate the Old Testament, deny the truth of *its* religion, and set aside four-fifths of all Mr. Watson's theological teachings. The true religion, the Christianity of religion, or the religion which recognizes and teaches Christ as the Saviour of men, was taught, most assuredly, long before the time of Herod. The thing which was new at this time was, that the old religion was now first taught, explained, and made more manifest, under the personal auspices and divine direction of *Jesus* as the Christ.

The question whether the characteristics and religious functions of Christ, as taught all over the Old Testament, pertained to, and were found and inhered in the man Jesus, could not, in the nature of things, arise until the period of the human life of Jesus. The Christian doctrines taught everywhere in both the Old and New Testaments now, indeed, assumed a new phase, and stood in a position they never could have appeared in before. The *doctrines* of religion, as taught in the Old Testament, are not only true, and therefore are to be believed, but when the Shiloh, the Christ in whom they all inhere, is made manifest, it then becomes necessary, in order to the continued maintenance of these doctrines, to recognize the personality of the Messiah thus appearing.

This the apostatizing Jews refused to do; and so Jesus

being the Christ, they necessarily denied the one as well as the other. Since Jesus *was* the Son of God, in denying him as such, they denied the Son of God, and so repudiated their former faith.

There never was any difference between Jews and Christians in those days—any kind of Jews—on the abstract question of the *Christianity of religion*. Here all were agreed. None had ever been taught any religion but the Christian religion. The Christ—the Christ to come—was the center and foundation of all true religion, so understood on all hands. And now—for the first time it could arise—the question arose as to the relation of the man Jesus to their religion. *Was he the Christ?*

The question which arose at this time, and which so agitated and divided the Church, and gave rise to the apostasy of a large portion of it, was about *Jesus*, not about *Christ*. This question arose and was agitated to some extent soon after Jesus was born; and still more extensively—so far as we are informed—during two or three years just before he entered upon his public ministry; and the question arose higher and higher, assuming more and more importance, until it rent the Church asunder, and the great Jewish apostasy became established.

The book of Acts gives some very interesting history respecting this dispute, and the final withdrawal from the Church of the apostate Jews. The absolute necessity of receiving Jesus as the Christ, has already been explained. It was as vital and necessary then as now, and no more so.

The influences brought to bear on the more irreligious portion of the Jews, and which caused their denial of Jesus, are sufficiently explained in Acts, though they are frequently alluded to in other parts of Scripture; and also the powerful manner in which the truth is urged in opposition thereto, is very fully set forth. The opposition to Jesus, it

is explained, originated entirely, or almost entirely, with a few Church officials; but their influence with the masses enabled them to draw off with them finally a large portion of the people.

It is at least an ambiguous mode of expression with many writers of high repute, to speak of the "*primitive Church*," the "*infant Church*," etc., in those days. There was nothing really "primitive," nor "infantile," nor "early," nor juvenile, about the Church in this period. According to any definitions that, in any proper sense, can be given to the term *Church*, it was at least fifteen hundred years old when Jesus Christ was born.

To speak of an *infant Church*, or a *primitive Church*, in those days, supposes that the long-known historic Church ceased to exist, and that another and different Church was then formed; and that the Jews, and then other people, were invited into the new Church. But none of these suppositions find the slightest support in the Acts of the Apostles.

But on the contrary, the continued and uninterrupted existence of the Church, and the religion of the Church, are fully recognized and taught. The apostatizing Jews *went out of the Church*, just as apostasy would necessarily take any one, or any number, out of the Church now. The origin of the Church, natural and proper, is, I think, mentioned in the latter clause of the twenty-sixth verse of the fourth chapter of Genesis. Since the things there stated, there has not ceased to be a Church in the true and most evangelical sense, and most certainly there never could be but one Church.

There is an historic question of interest belonging to the time comprehended in this history, which is not specifically alluded to in Scripture, and which cannot now be settled; that is, the number, or comparative number, of the Jews

who apostatized from their religion by denying Christ. It is certain the number was large, but in no sort of proportion so large as is generally taught by theological and ecclesiastical writers. This point is elaborated in another chapter, and needs but an allusion here.

A careful examination of all the places in Acts and elsewhere, where the opponents of Christ are spoken of—I say the opponents of Christ, for the opponents of Jesus were now necessarily the opponents of Christ—will show that the opposition is always predicated, not by any means of *the Jewish people generally*, nor of any very considerable or large number of Jews, but of the officials, or the Pharisees or Sadducees, of which there were but a few thousand in all Palestine, or of a few persons who chanced to be, at some particular time and place, the subject of local remark. The term, “the Jews,” so frequently used in this connection, most usually refers to some local occurrence, when but a few persons are evidently meant; but when alluding to opposition to the Saviour, this expression is never understood to mean the Jewish people, either wholly or generally. Many passages of the New Testament which some understand as placing the Jewish people, wholly or generally, in opposition to Jesus Christ, ought to be understood as referring, not to the people, but to the official persons. The Jews are spoken of nationally, or in a political or civil sense. A thing done by the Sanhedrim, or by the priests, or some of them, was said to be done by the Jews.

Some understand the remark of Paul, in Acts xiii., “Lo, we turn to the Gentiles,” as signifying an abandonment, by the apostles, of the Jewish people, and that henceforth they would preach only to Gentiles. But such a construction is utterly erroneous. In the first place, at that very time the great apostolic Church, amounting to at least myriads, was almost wholly composed of Jews; at least, the Jews in it

then amounted to "myriads, or "many ten thousands," as previously explained. And secondly, it was a remark made only to a local congregation, at Antioch, away in the northern part of Syria, far beyond the borders of Palestine, and in reference merely to a few Jews who chanced to be there at Church on that occasion, and whose personal conduct Paul thus reprovcd. And it would therefore be entirely gratuitous and unnatural to give the remark a wider application than to the Jews there present.

And so in many other places, a mere local remark, intended to have only a local application, is made to mean very much more than was intended.

Many persons, without noticing these things, consider the Jews an exceedingly fickle-minded people, when we now see them giving Jesus a grand public *entrée* into their city, with the most wide-spread and highly popular demonstrations of approval, and recognition of him as the Emmanuel of their faith; and in a few days thereafter crying, "Crucify him! crucify him!" But in truth all these things do not imply any change of opinion at all.

The former, though quite a large, and very popular, and public demonstration, was by no means the act of *the Jews*, but of, no doubt, several thousand Jews, out of their many millions—a considerable number, at least, of those then in the city of Jerusalem. The very brief historic synopsis we have, warrants the belief that the great body of those Jews then present joined in it. And of the latter—those who cried "crucify him"—the history gives not the least warrant for believing that any of them were among those who joined in the public acclaim of welcome, nor indeed that they were more than a handful in number. It was physically impossible that more than a very few could have abetted in either the trial or the crucifixion. St. John says it was the "chief priests and officers" who cried "crucify

him." The history plainly shows that the whole movement of trial and crucifixion was set on foot and prosecuted by the Sanhedrim and a handful of followers; and that they urged it forward in great haste and in great secrecy, "for fear of the people."

One great object of the book of Acts is to teach mankind the uninterrupted continuance of the Church through these days of ecclesiastical peril and agitation. It is shown that the gates of hell could not prevail against it; that the open apostasy of probably a full half of the Church did not in the least affect its continued being. Through the early teachings of error and misconception, many may believe and write that the Church suffered dissolution, and that its faith was changed; that a better Church was "founded," and another religion was "instituted;" but these things are errors still.

The very learned and able Doctor Macknight, with his hundred copyists, may tell us that "it was natural in forming them (the Churches) to imitate the model and follow the rules of the synagogue." But this does not make it so. There is not, either in the New Testament or the reason of the thing, the remotest intimation respecting the "forming" of a Church or Churches, except the mere extension of the Church, as is seen everywhere now. The apostles "imitated the model" and "followed the rules" of the synagogues in the same sense in which the Church to-day imitates the model and follows the rules of the Church of last year, with the single exception, as before explained, that after Christ's coming, some things naturally pertain to the Church which did not before. There was a simple continuance.

The numerical extent of this great ecclesiastical revolt—by far the most important the Church ever suffered—we learn not from any express language in Acts, so much as

from the scope of the treatise, or portions of it, but more especially from history outside the Scriptures. And it must be understood that this division of the Church did not take place in a day or a year—it was about a full age in the course of its completion.

And it is strange indeed, surprisingly so, that this great and important revolt is not treated of, so far as I know, at least, as a revolt, apostasy, or a turning away from the Church at all. Indeed, I do not remember to have seen the movement specifically treated of or attempted to be philosophically explained by any one. I have often seen the history glanced over very imperfectly, and left rather to be inferred that *the Church*, in some way, got away from these “Jews,” and left them the unmolested constituency of the “Jewish Church,” where they still remain. Thus the Church of God inhered, and still remains, in a body of people who renounce and deny all revealed religion! A more strange jumble of blunders could scarcely be conceived of.

It is not said that any theologians teach this expressly. It has been already said that I have not known of any philosophic teaching on the subject. But certainly it is a point of ecclesiastical service that deserves specific explanation.

Many persons, from these partial and incorrect teachings, come to the conclusion that the Saviour and his apostles *left the Church*, or got out of it some way, and set up a new one, beginning with a handful of persons; and that the Jews, all except “a few,” were the bitter opponents of this new Church; and that modern Jews occupy the same *status*, in relation to revealed religion, as the Jewish Church before the Christian era. Probably the least remarkable feature in such unscriptural notions is, that they are wholly untrue.

Indeed, no one can fail to see, if he will notice the state of things, and reflect a moment, that if the unbelieving

Jews continued the old religion and the old Church, then it follows, of unavoidable necessity, that Christianity is apostasy. The one or the other certainly is. And there is but one mode possible by which to determine which party continued the Church, and which apostatized from it, and that is by determining whether Jesus was or was not the Christ.

Upon the whole, the complete identity of both the Church and its religion, before the time of Christ and afterward, is very plainly set forth in Acts. It is most clearly and satisfactorily shown that Christ was the very same teacher of the very same religion, the same principles and truths, in his human personality, as he was in all time past in his invisible and spiritual personality. He is without variable-ness, or even the shadow of turning. And religion being necessarily the same always, the supposition of two Churches and two religions is inconsistent, both with the account given in Scripture, and with the simple analogies in the case.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

STRICTURES ON PALEY'S EVIDENCES.

PALEY's first and principal proposition is this: "There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labors, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone, in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct."

First. I hold that the mere belief of these men in the historic facts of those miracles was by no means the *sole* ground of the conduct attributed to them.

It was an essential part of the religious faith of these and all other Jews that the Emmanuel, as described in the Prophets, would at some time arise amongst them. The miracles certainly composed, in their minds, a large portion of the testimony which made them believe that Jesus was the Emmanuel of prophecy. But this simple belief was by no means the *sole* cause, nor even the chief cause, of the religious lives which followed. No man was ever known to lead a truly religious life, unless, in addition to the mere historic belief of miracles—which is merely intellectual—he had received a preternatural and spiritual communication from

God, through Jesus Christ, sensibly infusing the grace of God into his heart.

Secondly. I object to the statement, "And that they also submitted from the same motives to new rules of conduct."

It cannot be doubted that some of these witnesses of the miracles were pious persons, converted in the ordinary Christian sense, before these miracles were performed. Or at least, it is certain they might have been so converted, and were therefore already enjoying true religion. And hence, in regard to such persons, how can it be said that their mere belief in the miraculous facts caused them to submit to new rules of conduct?

When a man, in any age of the world, through any immediate agency or instrumentality, no matter what, becomes converted to true, divine religion—and surely there is but one religion—he immediately submits to new rules of conduct. But a man in the course of a truly religious life cannot be said to submit to new rules of conduct by merely having his mind enlightened and his faith strengthened by belief in all the miracles said to have been performed by our Saviour. He merely grows in grace, as all truly converted and pious men do, in all ages of the world, with or without special reference to miracles.

Hence it follows that such persons, alluded to by Paley, as may have been unconverted, and they only, submitted to new rules of conduct *on being converted*, whether that was before or after they became convinced of the verity of the miracles; but this was most certainly not solely in consequence of that belief. The religion which causes a man to submit to new rules of conduct is certainly not the *sole* result of an historic belief in the truth of miracles—for, alas! there are too many thousands who do thus believe, and "their belief of those accounts" does not produce the new rules of conduct.

Thirdly. In the production of proof on this subject, the author says: "Secondly, it is also highly probable, from the nature of the case, that the propagation of the new religion was attended with difficulty and danger."

I ask, What "new religion"? There is not the least intimation in the New Testament that the Saviour or his followers introduced or practiced a *new religion*, either in whole or in part, or that they ever suggested or hinted at any thing of the sort. On the contrary, they followed, closely and exactly, in every particular, the religion of the then existing Scriptures—teaching and adhering to them just as they were and are now written, as all true Christians do now, and according to their true and proper meaning.

In so doing, they discontinued the *form* of some Church ceremonies, as the Old Testament required, *and because the Old Testament required it*. These changes were, therefore, a plain and natural conformity to the Scripture teachings, and not a departure from them. The *typical* ceremonies must, of course, cease on the advent and death of the Messiah, *because they were typical* of that event.

"New religion" is a very sweeping expression, and "the new religion" is still more definite and comprehensive. The meaning of the words cannot be mistaken. And I now ask the simple question, Is the revealed religion of the New Testament *new*, as compared with that of the Old, or is it different from it? And then, if any man supposes it is, I ask him to point out one doctrine of religion or rule of ethics—much less a whole system of religion—in the New Testament that is not found in the Old. And his utter failure will be to him the best proof of his error.

Again: "This people, with or without reason, had worked themselves into the persuasion that some signal and greatly advantageous change was to be effected in the condition of

their country, by the agency of a long-promised messenger from heaven."

We are well informed that many persons professing religion in that day, entertained very erroneous views of the coming Saviour. This is not strange, since, in this day, with the life, manhood, work, and history of the Saviour before us, there are many whose views of him are nearly as erroneous. But that "*this people*"—meaning the entire Church at that time—entertained the belief above stated, is much more than can be proved; nay, it is directly in the face of the plain Scripture history. For that there were, at that time, thousands, tens of thousands, or, in the express words of the history, "many," "multitudes," "myriads," or "many ten thousands" of Jews who entertained correct views of the Saviour, is beyond question. Indeed, everybody well knows that for about ten or twelve years after the crucifixion, until the preaching to Cornelius, the entire apostolic Church, apostles and all, were Jews of this character; and I venture to add, that nobler, more intelligent, more pious and heroic Christians never lived, than were at least a goodly portion of these Jews.

And farther, so far as religion was misunderstood, at that time or any other—so far as anybody mistook or misapprehended the offices and true character of the Saviour—these errors are predicable, not of the Church, not of *this people*, in this sweeping language of the author before us, but of the individual persons, be they many or few, who entertained them.

Again we are told: "The extending of the kingdom of God to those who did not conform to the law of Moses, was a notion that had never before entered into the thoughts of a Jew."

Nor has it ever entered into the thoughts of a Christian who has right views of the Old Testament Scriptures in this re-

gard. For it is true, and is preached now by all the Christian ministers I know of, everywhere, that the man who does not receive and conform to the law of Moses, can have no part in the kingdom of God. If by "the law of Moses" he does not mean the written religion of the Old Testament, then I know not what he does mean. Who allows a Christian man to repudiate or depart from any part of the religious laws of Moses and the prophets rightly understood?

Such ante-Messianic ceremonies and observances of the Church as *pointed forward* to the coming of Christ—such as adumbrated his *coming*—are laid aside in *conformity* to the law of Moses, and not contrary to it. If not, then we now have, in our Christian Bible, conflicting and antagonistic Scripture, which is palpably impossible. Moreover, as above, these particular ceremonies, being typical, cease by the law which creates them, when their antitype renders them no longer typical. And then, if the same *things* be afterward taught, they are taught by some other forms of external action.

Again: "Even the enlightened Jew placed a great deal of stress upon the ceremonies of his law—saw in them a great deal of virtue and efficacy."

Not so! That statement must be denied flatly, because it is plainly and palpably untrue. The *enlightened* Jew understood the Old Testament Scriptures as those Scriptures did, and do now, really teach. And everybody knows that the Old Testament places just as much stress on the ceremonies of religion as the New does, and no more. Our blessed Saviour was an enlightened Jew, and so were his apostles, and thousands of other evangelists, ministers, and holy men then in the Church.

And again we are told: "The Christians avowed an unqualified obedience to a new Master."

Not so! the very reverse of it. They avowed an unqual-

ified obedience to the Shiloh of their Scriptures, to the Christ of prophecy, the Emmanuel of their ancient faith, the Christ of the religion of their fathers. To say that Jesus was a new Christ—new to the Scriptures—is to say he was a false Christ. Who of them ever dreamed of their taking up a *new* master—new to their written religion? This was precisely the charge made against them then by the unbelieving Jews, and which they everywhere denied most stoutly and peremptorily.

If Jesus was *new* to the Scriptures then, is he not equally, and for the same reason, new to the same Scriptures, and, consequently, false now?

And once more: “But during that time (the time of the apostles’ preaching) a great deal of ill-usage might be endured by a set of friendless, unprotected travelers, telling men everywhere they came that the religion of their ancestors, the religion in which they had been brought up, the religion of the State and of the magistrate, the rites which they frequented, the pomp which they admired, was, throughout, a system of folly and delusion.”

I copy that from Carter’s University edition of *Paley’s Evidences*, with notes by C. M. Nairne, 1856, p. 51; and I pause with surprise. I am unable to understand it in any way that will relieve it from the charge of being grossly libelous upon the Old Testament Scriptures, and perverse of the history of the ministry of the apostles.

All the labors of all the apostles, and of all true ministers since, was intended to sustain, to teach, to enforce, to make plain, and to enjoin upon all men, the written religion of the ancestors of those Jews, and of their State and their magistrate. And there is not one of the apostles and evangelists but would have suffered martyrdom before he would have pronounced his Scriptures “throughout” a system of folly and delusion.

As to "the rites which they frequented," and "the pomp which they admired," so far as they properly pertained to "the religion of their ancestors," they, too, are fully sustained by the Christian minister, as they were intended to be understood in the Old Testament teachings. Such of them as were typical of that which had come to pass, were of course taught therein to be laid aside by them; but not because there was any folly and delusion about them, but because they had answered their end in the mind of infinite wisdom. They are revelation.

These portions of revelation are not only not "*throughout* a system of folly and delusion," but they are none of them a whit below infinite wisdom and adaptation; and that high impeachment of the divine economy and forecast, supposing it to mean what it says, looks to me to be criminal.

It would be a strained hypercriticism, amounting to open violence upon the language of Paley, to apply the *folly and delusion* of which he speaks, to the mere errors of some Jews—many or few—in mistaking what the proper religion of the Church really was. Such errors existed at that time, as they do now; and everybody knows full well that at and long before the coming of Christ they were very abundant. But to these errors Paley makes no allusion. He charges "the folly and delusion" not upon the ignorance, heresies, or mistaken views, of individual persons as to what the true religion of the Church *was*, when well understood, but upon the veritable religion itself. He charges it home upon "the religion of their ancestors," the religion in which they all—not some of them—had been brought up—the religion of the State and of the magistrate. This, to mean any thing, must mean the written religion of the Old Testament Scriptures—the religion of the prophets and of the Church.

And in another place in the same treatise—page 488—

we are told that the Saviour "changed the religion of the world." Thus, and in many other places, it is assumed that prior to the time of the advent of the Saviour, all the religion of the world—that revealed from heaven, and that invented by man—it is all classed alike—was *a system of folly and delusion*.

I read in revealed theology of no such "Christianity" as Paley, in the arguments I have quoted, "*proves*" to be true. I may be told that Paley's work is a classic. In many respects it is. But it has a vein of error—a stream of untruth, clear, deep, and with some considerable breadth of surface. I will not say, even of this, that it is a system of folly and delusion; but I will say, I believe it to be grossly and palpably inconsistent with the divine teachings, and with all the reasonings and analogies of religion. Conflict between the Old and New Testaments would argue conflict in the Divine mind. We have but one revelation, one book, one religion, one Church.

CHAPTER LXXX.

THE GENERAL GROUND OCCUPIED BY PALEY, WHICH HE
CALLS CHRISTIANITY.

ON the newness of Christianity and its entire antagonism with the religion of the Old Testament, Paley is exceedingly plain and easily understood. Without one word of testimony, argument, or explanation, he assumes that, for some unknown reasons, the religion divinely enjoined upon mankind was exceedingly defective, and not only of no moral value, but was indeed greatly injurious to morals, and stood, moreover, greatly in the way of true religion; and that in order to introduce true religion, or "the gospel," this entire system of religion, which had been in vogue so long, had to be destroyed, and another entire system of religion placed in its stead. He speaks of the "new faith"—"the new religion," etc., without the least intimation that a true religion or a true faith had ever before existed in the world. But because the world had no religion but systems of "folly and delusion," Christ came into the world to establish—that is, to originate for the first time "a kingdom," or the kingdom of God, and so to introduce for the first time a true religion. He also frequently speaks of "our Scriptures," meaning the New Testament, in contradistinction to the Jewish Scriptures.

Everybody knows, that in all the history of religion,

every year and every day from Abel to the present time, there have been many persons who nominally professed the revealed religion, but who, from ignorance, prejudice, or a worse reason, have misconceived its true import and teachings in many things more or less important. With many, in all ages of the world, these errors have been fatal; and it is well known that at the time of Christ such errors were very prevalent. They were no doubt much more common then than at the present day. Upon their true, religious faith, as set forth in their Scriptures, which they all acknowledged, they had foisted much superstitious doctrine, which from some cause, no one knows what, they called "tradition." So far as we know, however, these errors and additions to the proper faith of the Church, prevailed, or perhaps existed, mainly among two little philosophical or literary societies, or schools, called Pharisees and Sadducees, both of which made up but the merest handful of the Jewish people, and which were quite recent things at the time of Christ.

But to these religious errors, whether much or little, or whether they affected a handful or a majority of the Church at that time, I do not remember that Dr. Paley makes any particular allusion; at least, he does not allude to them in connection with any of the extracts which I make from his book. It is not against these that his animadversions are leveled, but against "the ancient religion," against the religion of the "ancestors" of those people, against the religion of the Jewish "State" and of the "magistrate," which must mean the written religion; and that, everybody knows, was the same then it is now.

And Dr. Paley farther teaches that our Saviour, in order to set up the true religion, commanded and besought the people to abandon the then existing religion of the Church; that is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It was not to be modified or reformed, but was to be utterly abandoned,

for it was "*throughout* a system of folly and delusion." But he could not prevail upon his people. They would not repudiate the revealed religion of Scripture, but clung tenaciously to it, and he says they maintain it to this day. Nevertheless, a few, the merest few, perhaps a dozen or twenty—though he does not state the number, they being pious persons—did abandon the Old Testament religion, and were "converted" to Christianity, the "new religion." And this "new religion"—the Saviour having "*changed the religion of the world*"—is the *Christianity* which he "*proves*" to be true!

I have stated the case fairly; and I presume that nothing more is necessary to show it, in these particulars, to be, at least, ridiculous. I may be told that *Paley's Evidences* is a classic. I have nothing to do with that. I am not debating about its reputation. I am only exposing its fallacies and glaring violations of revealed history in some few points, as such history is notoriously known to everybody.

Dr. J. P. Durbin, in his Introduction to *Edmondson's Short Sermons*, states the character of the preaching of our Saviour very correctly, and in few words:

"The objects of his discourses were, to bring back his countrymen to a right interpretation of their sacred books, to reform their worship and manners, and to fix their attention on himself as the Messiah."

That is precisely what was needed, and what was done. Such of them as had strayed from a right interpretation of the Scriptures were to be *brought back* to their old religion. And this was perhaps then, as it is now, more or less the condition of all. I presume there is no man now living who needs not to be instructed in a right interpretation of the sacred Scriptures. And he was to reform their worship and manners—a thing much needed then, and much needed now; and no doubt, as a general thing in the Church, much

more needed then than now. And he was to fix attention on the Messiah—vitally needful then, and vitally needful now.

But here we have no more a “new religion” than a congregation, instructed and successfully exhorted in a sermon, abandons their religion and takes up a new one.

Dr. Smith, of England—*Elements of Divinity*, p. 259—also states correctly the religious doctrines and rules of morals which our Saviour taught: “It will not be necessary here to sketch in detail a summary of the doctrines taught by Jesus during his ministry. It will sufficiently indicate its scope to inform you that it was a spiritual expansion and development of those truths which had been previously communicated in the pages of the Old Testament.” That is exactly right. Or, in fewer words, he taught, explained, and elaborated the Old Testament teachings. Most assuredly he taught no “new faith”—no “new religion.”

The Saviour, and the apostles after him, labored to *teach* the old, regular religion of the Church—not to destroy it; to *inculcate* it—not to abandon it; to fix it solidly in the hearts of the people—not to repudiate it. It is marvelous that Dr. Paley should have fallen into such grave errors, and unfortunate that he had talent enabling him to state them in such a way as to cause hundreds to copy and thousands to believe them.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

NOTICE OF A FEW POINTS IN CLARKE'S COMMENTARY ON
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

IN his Preface to the Acts, Dr. Clarke holds the following strange and unaccountable language in speaking of the *change of religion* which he says took place at the time of Christ:

“The change is not a change of merely one religious sentiment or mode of worship for another, but a change of *tempers, passions, prospects, and moral conduct*. All before was *earthly, or animal, or devilish*, or all three together. But now all is *holy, spiritual, and divine*.”

Perhaps I might again remind the reader that in quoting from another I am careful to italicize as he does; otherwise the quotation would not be exactly correct. And now, I ask, can any man understand the above quotation so as to relieve it from the charge of open violation of the truth of sacred history? I will not apply that accusation to it; and then I can only say, I do not know what it means. It certainly means nothing that is true that I can understand. It has been abundantly proven hereinbefore, in many places and in many forms of argument, that *no change in religion whatever* took place in the Church at the time of Christ; and as to the unqualified declaration—for it is unqualified, either in the context or otherwise—that *all* religion before this

time was "*earthly, or animal, or devilish*, or all three together," is—I know of nothing else to say—it is notoriously untrue.

On Acts ii. 23, we read: "It was the Jews, therefore, who *caused* our Lord to be crucified by the *hands of the heathen* Romans." The same charge substantially may be read in many other places.

Whether intended or not, in ninety-nine cases in a hundred, the reader understands the words, "the Jews," to mean the whole Jewish people, or at least the great body of them; whereas, there is neither testimony nor remote probability that more than a few hundred at most, out of the vast millions that made up *the Jews*, who had any thing to do with the crucifixion, or even knew, or could have known, any thing about the death of Christ, or the proceedings leading to it, until afterward.

Indeed, properly speaking, it was neither *Jews*, nor *the Jews*, who opposed Christ. It was *false Jews*; such as "say they are Jews and are not, but do lie." Wickliff, on John v., in the edition of the Presbyterian Board, p. 227, states the case correctly: "This gospel tells how false Jews accused Christ of blasphemy," etc. That is the proper state of the case—*false Jews*. True Jews—those who were properly Jews—were after a short time called Christians.

In speaking of the three thousand who openly avowed Jesus as Christ on the day of Pentecost, we read that they "*went over from one party to another.*"

No; they did not *go over*, nor *go* at all. They *remained* firm in the religion of the Old Testament Scriptures, but no doubt all of them understanding their Scriptures better then than they did before. *They stood firm by the Old Testament, just as we do now*—just as Dr. Clarke teaches we must.

He assumes also that the three thousand were *converted* on that day. But of this we have neither testimony nor

probability, that I know of. Indeed, it would be marvelous, if not morally impossible, to suppose that that could be true. We cannot presume that *these* three thousand persons were all unconverted at and before this time—they were almost the very first to openly avow Christ; and who can suppose—especially without one word of testimony—that none of them were previously pious? No doubt many of them were then converted, but there can be no reasonable doubt but many of them were converted years before this. We would look there for pious people if anywhere.

Moreover, I do not know—for the history does not seem to state with certainty—the number of persons who on that occasion openly avowed their adherence to Christ. The language is, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.” And then, as a distinct declaration, it is said, “And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Now, were the three thousand made up in part of those who gladly received the preaching, or of others exclusive of them?

The reading will very naturally bear this construction, that first, the warm and ready friends of Christ and the apostles, mostly pious—and very likely there may have been thousands of such persons present—openly avowed themselves for Jesus as Christ, and were baptized into this belief. And then, secondly, three thousand more, not at first so ready, were, in the course of the day, “added unto them.” On this point the language is not clear; but I do not see but the open, avowed believers in Jesus may not then have amounted to ten thousand or more. I think the history does not inform us on this point.

At the close of the ninth chapter the Doctor tells us that “the offer of salvation” was made to “the Israelitish people,” and that “they utterly rejected it.” *UTTERLY* means *to the full extent, fully, perfectly, totally.*—Webster.

Now, in the face of this declaration, I state that on the day of Pentecost three thousand Israelites at least solemnly received the offered salvation; and that afterward “multitudes,” “multitudes,” “multitudes”—often spoken of—did the same thing. And that afterward—mostly in other parts of the country, as reported by Paul—“myriads,” or many “ten thousands,” did the same thing. And that for the space of about ten or twelve years the *entire* apostolic Church—amounting, may be, to millions—was made up of these same people exclusively. These facts are notorious, and known to everybody. Dr. Clarke’s statement is unaccountable; it is openly opposed to all the history.

On Acts xxi. 21, the Doctor says: “The Jewish economy was not yet destroyed; nor had God as yet signified that the whole of its observances were done away”—signifying clearly, both in this language and the context, that “the Jewish economy” was soon after *destroyed*, and that “the *whole* of its observances were done away.”

By the *Jewish economy* I believe is always understood the system of morals, religion, and worship set forth in the Old Testament. At, and for a short time before, the time of Christ, there had arisen among the Jews three little “*philosophical sects*,” as Josephus calls the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. They were not religious sects, but sects, or schools, or societies in philosophy and literature. They were very few in number, and had very recently sprung up. Because—chiefly—of their learning and influence, they, or rather two of them, are frequently spoken of in the New Testament. They had imbibed some very foolish errors in religion, as many do now, which were frequently and severely reprehended by the Saviour and his apostles.

Now, I suppose it could not for a moment be pretended that Dr. Clarke could call these new-fangled notions and

follies "*the Jewish economy*." That would be as erroneous as it would be now to call the follies of a little handful of Universalists, for instance, the Christian economy. The word *economy*, in the sense here used, means "a system of rules, regulations, rites, and ceremonies; as the *Jewish economy*." —Webster. These rules and regulations must, therefore, be written, or they could not form a "system."

Neither could any peculiar local habits, customs, usages, or observances, which might have been general among the Jewish people at that or any other particular time, be spoken of as *the Jewish economy*. This language must always mean the written economy.

Now, no man knows better, nor teaches more clearly, than Dr. Clarke, that that *economy*, just as it is written and properly understood, makes up part and parcel of the Christian economy this day. "*Destroyed*," indeed! Who protects it from destruction, or even invasion, more boldly and more ably than Dr. Clarke? And yet he says it was *destroyed*!

And as to *the whole* of its observances being *done away*, who does not know that many of them, just about as they were seen then, are seen now, every Sabbath-day, in every church in all the land? As before explained, those observances, *and those only*, which pointed *forward* to the divine advent, ceased at that time, not however by any means because they belonged to some particular economy, or some particular dispensation, but because their form and nature required, from the first, their discontinuance at that time. *Their discontinuance was a part of the Jewish economy, taught and provided for in it, and required by its laws.*

These strictures upon Dr. Clarke's Commentaries on the Acts could be pursued much farther, if necessary; and also the same thoughts and expositions could be drawn from many other portions of his Commentaries. Enough has been said, however, to show that one of the first commenta-

tors of his or any other age, by suffering himself to be drawn unconsciously into the false and pernicious doctrine of two different and opposing "*dispensations*," and so two different and opposing Churches, and so two different and opposing religions, has run himself into some of the wildest extravagances and boldest contradictions and absurdities that can well be conceived of.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

BISHOP WIGHTMAN'S MINISTERIAL ABILITY.

"THE term *New Testament* sets the gospel dispensation in contradistinction to the law, which was the Old Testament. Both proceeded from God, the Author and Revealer of true religion. The first was but a preparatory dispensation, leading the way to the second, revealed in the fullness of times, at the advent of Jesus Christ. It answered its temporary purpose, and, with its ceremonial service, it grew old and vanished away, as the light of the stars fades and is lost on the rising of the sun.

"The New Covenant embraces an office of ministration. What that office comprehends may be readily determined from the nature and design of the gospel dispensation.

"The ministers of the New Testament are *not* a priesthood. They have no sacrifice to offer up. They wait around no altar with sacrificial rites. They serve in no temple made awful by the presence of bleeding victims, and mediatorial offices for the rest of men. Nor are they a sacerdotal caste, tracing up their connection with some priestly fountain, by genealogical descent. The gospel knows of but one Priest, the great High-priest of our profession—of but one sacrifice, the offering of Christ 'once for all'—of no altar but the cross—of no temple by eminence, and built by human

hands: its temples are the hearts of holy men, dwelt in by the Holy Spirit.

"The central fact of the New Testament revelation being redemption by the sacrifice of Christ, and in that fact there being a distinct manifestation of God's method of showing mercy to a fallen world—pardon and renewing grace being thus offered to all who believe—it follows that a ministry is necessary to proclaim the 'glad tidings.' In order that the world may hear and believe, obviously there must be preachers. And the specialty of their office consists in this very thing: they are preachers, that they may deliver a spoken, clear, emphatic, living testimony, before the face of all men. Such an office and function enters as a necessary element into the constitutional scheme and grand design of the New Covenant. Without it, the gospel makes no progress in the world; and Christianity, in its practical influence on mankind, varies much according to the character, zeal, devotion, and intelligence of its preachers.

"This being so, we may observe that God has not left to the chances of human things the origination and perpetuation of this ministry. At first, the primitive preachers were called directly by Christ in person. Since his ascension, it is the office of the Holy Spirit to move men inwardly to take upon them this ministration. A divine call is necessary to the authority of the ministry."

The above are some of the introductory observations to a widely circulated sermon of the Rev. Bishop Wightman.

He would neither expect nor allow me to give to his remarks any high-strained or hypercritical meaning, but would have them understood according to their plain, obvious import, and as they *are* understood by the thousands who read them. Those who know the Bishop need not be told that he is a master of language, and, always selecting the very word he wants, makes it perform precisely the

agency in the conveyance of the idea he intends. Like a scholar, he italicizes but little; but when he does so, it is to the purpose.

"The term *New Testament* sets the gospel dispensation in contradistinction to the law, which was the Old Testament."

He tells us here precisely what he means by "the law." He means, as every one would understand, "the Old Testament." The Old Testament and the New, then, are in *contradistinction* to each other; that is to say, they are not only *different*, as a treatise on Geography and one on Astronomy are different, but they are *contrary*—in opposition to each other. And he tells us farther, that they "both proceeded from God."

This looks to me to be impossible. How can any two things coming from God stand *contra* to each other?

The Old Testament is a revelation of a system of religion; and the book contains nothing else, except some history of the times, persons, and mode of making the revelation, some logical illustrations and enforcement of the religion revealed, with the rules of ethics so set forth.

And the New Testament is also a revelation of a system of religion; and the book contains nothing else except some history of the times, persons, and mode of making the revelation, some logical illustrations and enforcement of the religion revealed, with the rules of ethics so set forth.

The opposition between these Testaments cannot be in the history, in the nature of the thing. Nor can it be in the logical teachings or enforcement of the religion or the ethics; because, being inspired, they could not teach in opposition to each other.

The contradistinction, then, if it exist at all, must be in the doctrines of religion or the rules of ethics contained in the two Testaments respectively.

And to this I reply, that, as a mere matter of historic

fact, this is not the case. As I have several times done before, I again repeat, that there is not a doctrine of religion nor rule of ethics—no, not one—in the New Testament which is not in the Old, nor one in the Old not in the New. Let one be produced.

There is a *distinction* in many things between the Old Testament and the New, as there is also between the different parts of each. The history is different; the modes and means of teaching religion are, in many things, times, and places, different. But how can there be *contradistinction* between any two parts of God's word?

And in regard to religious doctrines and moral rules, it is impossible there *can be* either distinction or contradistinction. The character of God being fixed and unchangeable, and the constitution of man remaining the same, this, as a logical consequence, is inevitable.

The first was a "preparatory dispensation," we are told. Most assuredly it was, just as any period is preparatory to the one that follows. The system of education practiced in the Bishop's youthful days was preparatory to that which he lately conducted so much more advantageously. The former "leads the way to the latter." And the old "vanished away," just as all periods vanish away. And if the period of the Church prior to any given date "answered its temporary purpose," it is in this respect like all other periods which precede a following one. This is the only sense in which there was a preparatory dispensation.

"The New Covenant embraces an office of ministration." Certainly it does; and so does the old. Will any man say it does not? Will any man say there was not, in Old Testament times, a proper ministry of the religion written, and that in the book this service or ministry of religion was not distinct from what is called the priesthood? Have we not now, in the Old Testament, very much of such minister-

ing of religion? Were not the old prophets ministers of religion? And were there not thousands of others? Were there not in the city of Jerusalem alone, in the days of Christ, several hundred houses of worship where the people met regularly on Sabbath, and where religion was ministered to all who would come? No man will for a moment say that the popular ministry of religion was chronologically *new* with the apostles. That the Old Testament "embraces an office of ministration," is as certain as that it is a printed book.

"The ministers of the New Testament are not a priesthood." Neither were those of the Old—understanding the term, priesthood, in the sense here meant. In both cases *they*—the teachers of religion, whether priests or not—are put forth as mere men, representing, showing, pointing to, teaching of, the great High-priest of our profession.

This subject has been previously examined, and the reader need only be reminded here that the Church-officers called priests, in the Old Testament, are nowhere by any means represented in Scripture as real priests atoning for sin. The very opposite is distinctly taught. But, living as they did, before the visible manifestation of the atonement by Christ, in teaching that atonement—the same atonement we teach now—they must needs teach it by *pre*-representing it. It could not be taught as we now teach it.

Let me set this matter at rest, by inquiring of any man if the Old Testament either teaches or tolerates some other or different atonement for human sin than the one atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary? Is or is not Jesus Christ the one and only foundation, center, corner-stone, sum and substance, of all the religion taught in the Old Testament?

The priests of the Old Testament are never represented as *atoning for sin*. They taught of—*about* the true and

proper atonement. They taught the doctrine of atonement. How did they do this? By showing that Jesus suffered and died on the cross for sinners? No; this could not be done in the period when they lived. The doctrine could not be taught in *that* way, and so it must needs be taught in some other. The way they did it, and the only way I can conceive of in which it could be done at that time, to illiterate people especially, was by *acting* it, by going solemnly through the forms of apparent atonement. They represented atonement to the eyes of the people. They were called priests because they *acted in the stead* of the Priest.

Micah seems to have understood it. Hear him: "Where-with shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression? the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

The Psalmist understood it: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened. Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required."

And so all the prophets and all Old Testament writers understood it. Quotations could be multiplied. This is the way the Old Testament *does* teach it.

"The gospel knows but one Priest." By *gospel* the Bishop means the New Testament. And does the Old Testament know more than one Priest? I refer to Isaiah in more than fifty places, and to every other prophet, for an answer.

Would the Bishop himself suffer the Old Testament to remain in his house if it in the slightest degree, or in any manner or form, ignored Christ as the only true Priest—the only atoning sacrifice?

Mr. Watson very properly says: "The high-priest was a living representative of the great 'High-priest of our pro-

fession.' And the Levitical sacrifices plainly had respect to the one great sacrifice for sins." That is, these two things were used to *represent*, to *teach* the same things, and truths, and doctrines, which we represent now in a different mode.

"The central fact of the New Testament revelation being redemption by the sacrifice of Christ."

Just so. Since the actual, visible sacrifice, it is taught as a *fact*; before, it could be taught only as a *truth*. Our own death and resurrection is now taught only as a truth; at a future time it will become fact. And so the same doctrine is now as readily taught from the Old Testament as from the New.

"In order that the world may hear, obviously there must be preachers."

Most assuredly; but this is not a peculiarity of any period of the Church. It was always the case—as well before as since the time of Christ.

"At the first, the primitive preachers were called directly by Christ in person."

Neither is this a peculiarity of any period of the Church—it was always so. There is not an intimation in Scripture, that I know of, from the earliest period, that any persons came to be preachers in any other way than by direct divine designation.

"A divine call is necessary to the authority of a minister."

Certainly this is the case, but it was always the case. It is not a peculiarity of any period.

The Bishop is drawing a *contrast* between the New Testament, which he says represents "the gospel dispensation," and the Old, which he says represents "a preparatory dispensation;" and the "contradistinction" between the two is shown to us in the items quoted above. But on looking at the items, it is apparent there is no contradistinction whatever. He has utterly failed to show us any thing in the

New Testament, in the construction or constitution of the ministry, which is even strikingly different, much less in contrast, with that in the Church before. The particular functions of the ministry since the time of Christ, as he cites them, are by no means peculiar to that period, but are plainly common to the ministry generally.

He says the Old Testament was the law, and the New is the gospel. But most assuredly this distinction will not bear the test of a moment's examination, however fashionable the expression may be. There is perhaps no word commonly used in religious literature with so many different senses as *law*. But in this place its sense cannot well be mistaken. It means that plan, or system of divine government, which stands before, and in contradistinction to, the dispensation of salvation, which we call gospel. But to predicate the former of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the latter of the New, is one of the manifest errors of the day. These two systems of administration stand related, by no means, in the order of time, but in the order of sequence. The gospel—*i. e.*, the system of saving men by and through Christ, as they are sometimes saved now—was introduced at the first. Were men not saved by Christ, in and according to the gospel, thousands of years before Christ's manifestation of himself in the flesh?

The law is a system of absolute obedience: do those things and live by them. And the gospel is the vicarious interpretation of a Saviour—a daysman betwixt God and us. And most assuredly both these things are in the Old as well as in the New Testament.

It seems to me, therefore, a manifest error to say that the New Testament sets the gospel dispensation in contradistinction to the law, which was the Old Testament.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

JUDAISM CONSIDERED, NOT AS THE ANTAGONIST OF CHRISTIANITY, BUT AS A RELIGIOUS SYSTEM DIFFERING THEREFROM, AND TERMINATING WHEN CHRISTIANITY BEGAN.

THE religion of the Old Testament is frequently spoken of, not as the antagonist of Christianity—not as something positively wrong, or false, but as something introductory to the true religion—a temporary system, intended not for mankind, but for a special people, a single nation. Hence they say it was a shadow of good things to come; it was a bud, and Christianity is the fruit. And so in full time it vanished away, and the complete system was ordained. The first, it is said, consisted in forms and ceremonies—was legal only—and gave way when the atonement was made for a religion of faith in Christ. This first, or temporary religion, was legal only, we are told, in the sense that it enjoined only the *doing* of certain external things, whereas Christianity requires the *believing* of certain revealed truths; and the old having answered its temporary purpose, is laid aside to give place to the new and the better.

This is, as nearly as I can state it in few words, the view of many theologians; and I think it is utterly untenable, and incapable of bearing the touch of sober examination. Let us see.

First. I can see that a *spelling-book*, for instance, is a useful instrument in education. It is used a while, and then laid aside finally, because no longer useful. I have not read one for the sake of instruction for many years. It is true it is not the enemy of the books I do read, but with me its particular lessons have waxed old, its didactic teachings have vanished away; no man keeps it in his library; no man refers to its lessons to elucidate questions in science, nor even for the improvement of general literature.

But is this the relation of the Old Testament to the system of revealed religion? Will any man say it is? And if it is, then what have we to do with it? It is then no longer a useful part of our Scriptures. Why read it? What care we about it? If it has vanished away, let it go. If superseded, let it be superseded. Then it is not gospel, though it may once have been, or may have served the same purpose. Why attempt to elucidate *its* text in inculcating religion?

Secondly. It may be said it is not all of it thus useless, but only parts of it. Then, I ask, what parts? Which books? which chapters? which verses, or paragraphs? This is all important to be known, in order that we may know which portions to exclude from our practical lessons in religion. No one that I know of has pointed out these obsolete portions which have thus vanished away.

And then another difficulty is—one of many—that an inspired writer has told us that *all* the Old Testament, every word of it, is now for us *profitable for doctrine*, for the correction of our religious faith, for our growth and perfection in religion. Then it will not do to exclude the whole, neither will it do to exclude a part. And not only *will* it not do, but it *does* not do. Nobody does it; nobody allows it to be done.

Thirdly. But is it true, as mere matter of historic fact, that the Old Testament writers confine their teachings to the mere primary and elementary principles of religion? Are the lessons taught merely preparatory, introductory, precursory? That is a plain question, and is susceptible of a plain answer.

On the contrary, everybody knows that human genius, inspired or uninspired, has not produced upon the page either of literature, of moral science, or of theologic truth, the equal—I will not say the superior—of those transcendently sublime and holy authors. Their eloquence, for pathos and sublimity, is yet unrivaled. Their logical profundity and deep soundings into the inner labyrinths of thought—were it not for the Apostle Paul—I would say, had never been reached in logical composition. Where is *any thing* in human literature equal to the sublime pathos and moving appeal of Judah's speech before Joseph? Where is any thing calculated to stir more deeply, or picture more forcibly, the inner and profounder principles of Christianity? It brought down the king from his stern official bracings with which he had nerved himself for the trial, and placed him a captive at the feet of a captive peasant. And where is the writer who surpasses—not to say equals—Isaiah in those lofty soarings of eloquence, and those deep researches into the deeper mines of reason, with which he unravels and elucidates the higher and sublime principles of theoretic and practical godliness?

Say, does not the erudite and classic theologian *graduate* in the school of the older prophets? Elementary, indeed! Then where are the classics?

Fourthly. The old system has vanished away—become obsolete—we are told, and is laid aside. *What is it*, I inquire, that has thus become obsolete? It must be some of its religious doctrines, or some of its rules of moral

conduct. And will any man venture to say that one jot or tittle of either has become antiquated, obsolete, or in any way has lost any of its innate virtue, or practical binding force upon us?

I have previously, several times, and perhaps sufficiently, explained that there is not a doctrine of religion nor rule of moral conduct in the New Testament, which is not found in the Old. Any man may convince himself by trying to find one. Then what has become obsolete? Nothing about religion—nothing about morals. And I confess that but for their teachings in religion and ethics, I think I could get along without either the Old or New Testament.

Fifthly. But perhaps we may be told that it is the religious *ceremonies* of “the old dispensation” which have become obsolete, or were changed; that is, in plainer words, the ceremonies of religion in vogue before Christ, vanished away on the advent of the Saviour. This, in the first place, if this be all, is whittling the thing down to little or nothing. If nothing vanished away but some religious *ceremonies*, then what about the system of religion being a temporary system? What about the first being merely *preparatory*? How can some religious ceremonies be *preparatory* to others? How can some ceremonies be *adapted* to Jews, and others to mankind in general? How are these ceremonies the bud and those the ripe fruit?

What are religious ceremonies? Do they embody any religious tenets? Does any doctrine inhere in a ceremony? A ceremony is only a mode of inculcating and impressing religious truths, and inspiring religious feelings. *Kneeling* in prayer is a ceremony. *Standing* in prayer is a ceremony. Congregational reading of the Scriptures is a ceremony, and so is preaching, the routine of a class-meeting, taking bread and wine in the eucharist, dismissing a congregation,

uncovering the head by men, singing, etc. The various branches of the Christian Church have a hundred ceremonies. And are these the things which are *perfected, established*, made permanent, under "the new dispensation"?

But as matter of fact, this is not true, for they are always changing here and there. Neither is it true that those in vogue before Christ ceased, discontinued, or waxed old at all, in any way, or for any cause. Very many of them are in vogue now, and have always been. Then if it was not morals, nor religion, nor ceremonies that was changed and made permanent, what was it?

And if every verse of every chapter of every book in the Old Testament is now "profitable for doctrine," and for every moral and religious purpose, then, I ask, what is "abrogated"? what has waxed old and vanished away? what has the *Christian* religion superseded? what was "temporary" as compared with "true religion," to quote the precise words of a theologian?

I hold myself ready, in good faith, to sit at the feet of any teacher and be taught in biblical knowledge; but if the teacher can't teach me any thing that I can understand, then I am not taught. And mere unexplained assumptions about an old and a new dispensation, about a temporary and preparatory system, its having vanished away and Christianity coming in its stead, etc., do not convey to my mind any clear ideas sufficiently tangible for a rational understanding of the subject.

Sixthly. But do not the Scriptures speak of some things pertaining to the Old Testament as having *waxed old*, and *vanishing away*? Then what was thus left behind, old and useless?

That question, it seems to me, is easily answered. Let any man with a Reference Bible, turn and read carefully all those passages first; and then let him remember—1st.

That a part of Scripture was revealed *before* the advent of our Saviour. 2d. That in those times, symbolic teaching was carried to a pitch of didactic force and perfection which to us in this age would be perfectly astonishing. They had no popular literature, but were shut up to the necessity of that mode of teaching generally. And let him farther suppose that the people then had the very same written religion and rules of morals we have now; that there was nothing temporary about either, but that they recognized the same faith in the same Christ, the same gospel, the same priesthood, the same holiness; that in all these things they stood precisely where we stand, except that, chronologically, they stood on the other side of the mere period of the *coming* of Christ.

Now the reader sees that, in order to teach the very same things we teach, and not having the life, death, and cross of Christ to point to as seen things, they must reach the same ends by other modes. They had to teach the *future coming* and the character of Christ as our Saviour; and we have to teach the *having come*, and the character of the very same common Saviour, and the same conditions of salvation.

This teaching they would do with such means as they had, and not with such as they had not. They had to teach things which had not been seen—that is, they had to lead forward into the future and pre-represent coming things; and this they had to do in the Oriental style of symbolizing.

This was a very different thing than for us to point to visible, historic things, and draw inferences therefrom.

Now I think it is easy to see what vanished away. The *pointing forward*, with all the dimness of future coming history, vanished away. The absolute necessity for symbolic teaching vanished away. The chronological *position*

they occupied vanished away. The *anticipation* of a Saviour's coming vanished away. And all those rites which pointed forward vanished away.

If we could but realize the greatness and the suddenness of their change of chronological position in regard to the Saviour, we would see a great and wondrous waxing old and vanishing away; but we would see no vanishing away of any thing except such things as pertain *naturally* to the respective periods, before and after the human advent of Christ.

Our religion is eminently natural and rational. Our Saviour is the same kind of Saviour, and the same personal and identical Saviour, to all the children of Adam.

And yet Dr. Clarke tells us that "the change is not a change of merely one religious sentiment, or mode of worship for another, but a change of tempers, passions, prospects, and moral conduct. All before was earthly, or animal, or devilish, or all three together; but now, all is holy, spiritual, and divine."

I don't believe that, because it contradicts the plain Scripture. It is a mistake that, before Christ, *every thing* was, in the highest sense, bad; and that since, "all" was essentially good. But both before and since, there was a natural world and natural people; and men acted, and thought, and talked, and lived naturally; and the Bible and its religion are rational things; and God is without variableness or the shadow of turning.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THE MANNER IN WHICH ST. PAUL
IS SOMETIMES MISREPRESENTED.

WE have far more of personal biography of St. Paul than of any other individual Christian of his time. He was in early life a man of learning, great force of character, and much personal prominence among his people; but like many other Church-members, both in that day and in this, he had no piety. He had his views and opinions about religion, and he held to them with great tenacity. This is no very uncommon thing in any age of the Church. He was a high-toned religionist, a churchman, a philosopher, and critical disputant, arbitrary and intolerant.

When the question arose about Jesus being the Christ, he took sides with the Sanhedrim, contending that he was not; and thus, that is the same as to say, that those modes of worshiping and of inculcating religion which were naturally and essentially *ante-Messianic*, were still *ante-Messianic*, and therefore were to be continued as such. This conclusion was of course proper and legitimate, upon supposition that Jesus was not the Christ, no matter what other views and opinions might be held. He believed these things. And the reason why he believed them was the same that causes other men in all ages to believe gross religious errors, viz., proud, high-headed notions, and worldly-mindedness about religious

things. This is generally what prevents men from submitting to the simple teachings of revelation.

But Saul was converted—converted as other men are. He was converted to Christianity—to the revealed religion—to the truth—the gospel—converted to God—to the true religion of his ancestors. But there was then no revealed written religion existing in any tangible form—no Christianity—no gospel except that contained in the books of the Old Testament.

But what was he converted *from*? He was converted from sin. But more particularly, he was converted from a heresy he imbibed a few years before in denying that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. Previously to that time, though unconverted, and only nominally a Christian, his faith was as true, as orthodox, as it ever was, so far as we know. The only error in doctrine he was ever guilty of, so far we know, was his denying, not Christianity abstractly—for that he never did—but denying *Jesus* as Christ.

His religion now is Christianity undoubtedly, of the purest and best stamp. But how does it differ from his former religion? So far as practical piety is concerned, he never had any religion before. He is now for the first time a converted man. But so far as his religious belief of doctrines and principles are concerned, the case is different. His religion now is prominently and vitally opposed to the heresy he entertained during the last few years about Jesus not being the Christ; but his doctrines and principles, so far as we know, are the same they were before he took up that heresy; though previously we have very little knowledge of him at all. In the theory, he may have believed and understood the Scriptures—the Old Testament—very well; or he may have entertained any of these or those notions of Pharisees or Sadducees, or any other religious errors afloat at that time. Supposing him to have understood his own religion,

his own Scriptures, then his religious opinions now are the same they were before he repudiated Jesus as Christ, for the Old Testament is not contrary to the New.

And when converted, he behaved himself like other converted men. Now he believed in Jesus, whom he formerly repudiated. And seeing that this was a vital question, and the truth of it captivating his heart, he preached it to others.

We are told the conversion of St. Paul gives very great evidence of the truth of Christianity. Just as much as that of other men, I think, and no more. The conversion of any man gives to *him* absolute demonstration on the subject; and so the conversion of any man, supposing that fact to be so, is necessarily conclusive evidence of the truth of Christianity; for it would be logically absurd to suppose any *conversions* and the Christian religion not be true. I cannot, therefore, consider Lord Lyttleton's argument on this point of any value—it is mere special pleading; and so of the same opinion advanced by later writers.

Dr. Clarke says, (end of Rom. ix.,) "Had he (Paul) continued a Jew, he would have infallibly risen to the highest dignities and honors of his nation."

And did he not continue to be a Jew? How could he cease to be a Jew? What is meant by his ceasing or continuing to be a Jew? He was, naturally and ecclesiastically, what was commonly called a Jew. When converted to the true faith—to a proper understanding and practical application of his own faith—he, like all other men who may have imbibed religious error more or less, laid aside those errors and cherished the truth.

Surely religious *error* did not make Paul a Jew; for if so, then the prophets, the Saviour, the apostles, and millions of other pious Jews, were not Jews. Surely his being a Christian did not prevent him from being a Jew; for everybody

knows the whole apostolic Church, without one single exception, was for many years composed of Jews.

The idea that a man cannot be both a Jew and a Christian is preposterous. That would contradict the Christian religion everywhere with all its reasonings and analogies, and would indeed make—as alas! many writers have it—Christianity a new religion, and the Old Testament a fable.

We are told in the “Guide to the Study of the Bible,” in the *Comprehensive Commentary*, *Sup.* p. 102, that Paul’s chief object in writing the Epistle to the Romans was, “to lessen their attachment to the Mosaic law.”

Perhaps I have not as much patience as I ought to have with such biblical *guides* as this. If some opponent of Christianity had written that St. Paul sought to *lessen* the attachment of the people to any thing written in Scripture, or to the whole Scripture, these same guides to the study of the Bible would have attacked him as an infidel; for I believe I read everywhere in all Christian writings, that Paul’s whole life and labors, after his conversion, were devoted to the *elevation* and inculcation of all revealed religion in the minds and hearts of all men.

And for my part, I do not wish to study any “Bible,” nor any part of any, which St. Paul depreciated or *lessened* in the estimation of anybody; because, with me, it is a settled matter that Paul was an inspired teacher of all the revealed religion we have, and therefore I have no need of any guide in that direction. It is a road I intend not to travel either with or without guides.

No, gentlemen; Paul never sought to lessen the attachment of any people to any Scriptures, call them by what name you will. He sought the very reverse. He wrote to the Romans in order that they might *understand* the Mosaic law—the then existing Scriptures—and thereby appreciate it more and more highly. He sought, as I believe all evan-

gelical ministers do now, to enthrone these Scriptures, every word of them, high and deep in the mind and heart of the people.

The *Christian Instructor*, Vol. ii., p. 423, tells us, that Paul's object in writing his Epistle to the Hebrews was, "to prove to the Jews from their own Scriptures the divinity, humanity, atonement, and intercession of Christ, particularly his preëminence over Moses and the angels of God, to demonstrate the superiority of the gospel to the law, and the real object and design of the Mosaic institution."

That is not well expressed. His object was rather to convince them that the *man* Jesus was their Christ—the Christ of their religion.

No Jew who understood the Old Testament ever questioned "the divinity, humanity, atonement, and intercession of Christ;" but he did not therefore, necessarily, from the mere literature of the Old Testament, recognize Jesus as the Christ. That belief could result only from a candid and honest comparison of the *man* with the Scripture representations of him, and from a faithful individual effort to test his Messiahship.

But if Paul sought to set his brethren right with regard to Christ, "from their own Scriptures," how is it that he sought to "lessen their attachment" to their Scriptures?

The truth is, that St. Paul had the highest veneration for the then existing Scriptures, every word of them; he taught them, preached them, recommended them, every word of them. But he would have them understood, and not misunderstood.

Paul's great arguments everywhere among the Jews were to prove that the man Jesus was the Christ of Scripture. That great fact once established, it then followed, from every part of the Old Testament—from "the Mosaic law," whether that expression be taken to mean a part or all of the Scrip-

tures—that all the adumbrant, forereaching, pre-representing rites, of which there were several still in use in the Church, viz., passover, circumcision, typical priesthood, etc., that these must cease, because you cannot point forward to a thing which is past.

The logical religious arguments of St. Paul, so far as we have them, were directed exclusively to one grand, central point, the great basis upon which all true religion rests, which was this: *That the man Jesus was the Christ of Old Testament prophecy.* That *Christ* was infinitely superior to Moses, was as stoutly claimed by the unbelieving as by the believing Jews. But the disputed point was, Who is Christ? These find Christ in Jesus, but those deny it. That, and that only, was the point of dispute.

Let it be admitted that Jesus is Christ, and then every thing else follows as matter of course. You have now only to understand the Scriptures intelligibly, and every thing explains itself fully. The adumbrant, forward-reaching, or typical rites, whatever they may be, cease as matter of course, and every thing else continues and moves on smoothly and without change.

Without *change*, I say, except in this, that great and increased light is thrown upon the whole picture of religion. All the principles of religion there are, are enunciated in the Old Testament; but now they are elaborated, explained, illustrated, and enforced in a manner better than they were or could have been before.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

A GLANCE AT FLEETWOOD'S LIFE OF CHRIST.

IN his Introductory Essay, p. 62, it is said, "From this it is evident that Judaism, in its very nature, was a *temporary system, preparatory to another which should fulfill its pending anticipations, and consummate its partially dissolved designs.* In its very nature the religion of Moses could not continue."

Leaving for the present out of the question the last statement of the above extract—that the religion of Moses could not continue—I remark concerning the previous statement, that there is a sense in which it may be understood to be true—rather an oblique and not very classical one, perhaps—and there is a sense in which the author could not have intended to be understood. Fully understood, there can scarcely be a difference of opinion. Let us see.

First. The author in many places just along where the extract is found, and elsewhere, uses the word *Judaism* in its ordinary and proper sense to mean the religion of the Old Testament, as its principles and theory are therein written and enjoined.

Secondly. In the above extract he uses the word *Judaism* in a very different sense, and to mean a different thing. This is certain, because he goes on to explain that the things, or system of things, which could not continue beyond the

death of Christ, were not *religion*, but *actions*. And all this is very true, and is the very thing I have contended for in many parts of this Essay.

Thirdly. Now, what is *religion*? and what relation do *actions* bear to it? Religion—any religion, true or false—is exclusively intellectual, moral, and spiritual, and is in no sense physical. Religion no more consists in external actions of the physical man, than it does in wood or iron. Nevertheless, actions bear a very intimate relation to religion, and stand very nearly allied to it. What is that relation? *Actions are enjoined and used as instruments for the teaching, inculcation, and propagation of religion.* Walking to church is not religion, but it is an action sometimes used for the inculcation of religion. Sitting, standing, kneeling, singing, pouring water on the head, and pronouncing certain words, taking a crumb of bread and a sip of wine, making the sign of a cross on the head or breast, burning wax-candles in the daytime, immersing a person in water and pronouncing certain words, chanting in Latin, reading the Scriptures, preaching, and listening to preaching, uncovering the head, and many, many other physical actions seen now-a-days everywhere in the Church, are in themselves not religion, by any means—they are mere muscular actions, used more or less profitably or unprofitably as instruments for the teaching and inculcation of religion.

Fourthly. Religion in its very nature being in a man's head and heart, consisting in principles and emotions, being invisible, and man's constitutional susceptibility being what it is, his head and heart are very much influenced by his actions, either in favor of or in opposition to religion, or to almost any thing else. Actions, therefore, of a thousand kinds, in the various circumstances of human condition, are most powerful instruments for the teaching and inculcation of religion. And these actions, if viewed rightly, give evi-

dence of the existence or non-existence of the belief and feeling which constitute religion.

Those who tell us that some religionists—Jews, Moham-medans, or Greek, or Romish, or other Christians—hold their religion to consist in actions, ceremonies, teach that which cannot be true. It is impossible for any person sufficiently rational to have religion at all—any kind of religion, true or false—not to know that his religion *consists* in his moral, mental, or spiritual relation to God, or to his false god. However much importance—proper or improper—he may attach to external acts of worship, he could at most, or at least, but regard them as pleasing in the estimation of God, because of the evidence they give of his fealty, his reverence, and his obedience to God; and he could not but regard his religion to consist in these feelings of fealty, reverence, and obedience.

Fifthly. In the period of the Church before Christ, divine teaching being rational, and men being rational, their religious actions, or ceremonies, were wisely directed. How wisely directed? Why, so arranged as would best promote intellectual thoughts, and holy feelings and sentiments, in the people in those ages. And how could this be done? In this way: Besides such actions as are naturally common, and rationally promotive of religious sentiments in all circumstances, there was another class of actions which, in the nature of things, was peculiar to that period, and could not by possibility be used to promote religion in any other periods of the world. And what class of actions was this? Any actions which could be made to teach specifically and particularly of the Saviour and his atoning work. Before his visible appearance his person and work could be taught only by adumbration or pre-representation. You were then teaching about things which had not yet happened, but which would happen;

but now, after the thing has happened, you can no longer use these kinds of instruments; nor would you if you could, for now you have the historic facts, which are a hundred-fold better.

Sixthly. Now, in that ante-Messianic period, Christ, as their Saviour, was taught to the people by the use of a number of *actions* of this kind. And these actions, or this system of actions, as any one may choose to express it, could not, in the nature of things, as before stated, continue to be used to inculcate religion—give a knowledge of Christ—after the period of the humanity of the Saviour. Certainly that was temporary “in its very nature,” because ceremonies pointing forward to Christ’s future manifestation could not continue beyond that event. Things typical of Christ’s appearance were of course temporary; but typical things were, in their very nature, *actions*, and not religion. And

Seventhly. Now, it is these forward-pointing, these pre-representing *actions*, which make up the “*temporary system*” that Fleetwood says was “in its very nature temporary.” As to their religion itself, that was not temporary, because, besides the impossibility of the thing, as previously argued and explained perhaps sufficiently, it is historically true, in the greatest abundance, that all the doctrines of religion now written in the New Testament were long previously written in the Old. To go no farther than Chapter XLIII. of this Essay, there are there quoted four hundred passages from the Old Testament, prescribing and inculcating about three hundred different doctrines and shades of doctrines of Christianity. And it will perhaps be readily conceded by all, that these Old Testament doctrines cover all the conceivable ground occupied by Christianity in all imaginable shades and shapes.

Therefore, those who understand Fleetwood to mean that

the *religion* of Judaism was temporary, understand that which is not and cannot be true. The "temporary" things were only certain instruments or modes of teaching religion.

As to the expression in the latter part of the above extract, that "the religion of Moses could not continue," the author certainly does not mean *religion*. Nobody believes that. Every Christian minister, every Sabbath, everywhere, teaches, enforces, and recommends, all the doctrines of religion written by Moses or any one else in the Bible. The remark is an inadvertence, a slip of the pen, a failure to discriminate between religion and physical modes of teaching religion.

Moreover, what does the author mean by "the religion of Moses?" The remark does not strike me as either very theological or very classical. Where does the idea come from that there is or has been a religion in the world entitled to that appellation? Why not call the religion written in the Old Testament the religion of Abraham, of Joseph, of Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Daniel? And why not call the New Testament the religion of John, of James, Paul, or Peter? Have we two religions—one of Moses and one of Christ? Personally, like other men, Moses had some religion; and if it was not Christianity, then it was some form of infidelity about which I can certainly care but very little.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

CATECHETICAL OF THE CHURCH.

1. WAS there in existence, before the period of Christ, a regular, divinely recognized Church? And has there been one since? Now, were these two *separate, distinct, and different* Churches, or *one and the same*?

2. Does not a new Church necessarily imply a new religion? Can you separate between a *Church* and the *religion* of the living persons who compose it?

3. Was there, at or about the time of our Saviour, any difference of opinion between any persons about the Church, as to its organization, its laws, government, kind or number of officers, etc.? Were there any complaints put forth by any one of, or about, the then existing Church? or was there any suggestion, by any one, that another or a better Church would be desirable?

4. Was our Saviour born into the Church of his fathers—formally initiated into the same as others were?—did he fully recognize its authority all the days of his life, and die a regular member of it?

5. Did all the apostles do the same thing?

6. Was it claimed by any one, either then or now, that in all the Church trials we read of in the New Testament, including that of the Saviour, (of course, in this regarding him as a man,)—was it ever claimed that the Jewish Church

had not proper jurisdiction in the several cases? But, on the contrary, was not the jurisdiction always acknowledged?

7. Is there any thing in Scripture about a new Church, or about two Churches, or a distinction between Churches chronologically separated?

8. Did the Saviour or the apostles introduce any new ecclesiastical rules into the Church? and if so, what were they? Or, were there any new Church rules observed in those days other than such as pertained naturally to a post-Messianic period?

9. Did the Saviour and the apostles frequently officiate in the then existing Church as officers of the same?

10. Is the formation of a *new* Church—it being a true Church—a *possible* thing, supposing the previous one to be a divinely recognized Church?

11. Was the Church of God at any time in its history confined to any particular people—the lineal descendants of Jacob, or any other distinct people? On the contrary, was not the door of the Church *always* open to *all*? that is, of course, it is meant, all who would believe the truth and be religious, conforming to the rules of the Church, as is the case now.

12. Did not “many people of the land become Jews”? that is, become identified with the Church; and was there any “difference” between these and those?

13. Which party of Jews *left the Church* at the time of the apostles—those who believed and received Christ, or those who denied and rejected him?

14. Was it always the policy of the Church—at least, by profession, and the ostensible rule of the Church—to proselyte all mankind? or, the more the better?

15. Were Gentiles, or anybody else, ever denied admittance into the Church? And so, was it not always the duty

of all men to go and live in the Church—that is, where there was no physical hindrance?

16. Were the customs, usages, and various doctrines of the Church ever the same in any two periods, a few years asunder, or in any two countries a few miles apart, or in two denominations of the Church at the same times and places?

17. To what Church did Timothy belong when Paul first became acquainted with him? And did he ever join any other?

18. Did Paul ever join any Church after he was eight days old? Did he distinctly and in terms recognize his membership in the Church of his fathers, when he was an old man, not long before his death?

19. Did the people of true religion, before the appearance of our Saviour, usually and habitually assemble on the Sabbath-day, for public worship, in houses appropriated to that purpose, or congregate in a place of convenient numbers? And in such congregations were the forms of worship materially different from such things since that period to the present time? And, if different, in what respects were they different? Let such difference be stated in terms, and not in vague generalities. What were houses of worship in, and before the apostolic age, usually called?

20. How many houses of public worship of this sort were there in those days in Jerusalem? And was such Sabbath-day worship in anywise private or exclusive, or was it public and open to all men?

21. Was the preaching of the gospel—whether that exact word was used to define it or not—a common thing in the Church at, before, and after the appearance of Christ? And how long has *gospel* been used to describe or denote the character of true religious preaching in the Church?

22. Did John the Baptist preach out-doors or in houses?

23. Was the preaching of religion before the sending out of the seventy, and about that time, true or false preaching? Or was it, as it is now, true with those who understood the Scriptures aright, and untrue as any may have misunderstood their doctrines and precepts?

24. Were the priests mentioned in the Old Testament real atoning priests? or was it their business—operating as they did before the atoning Priest became visible to the world—to pre-represent his atonement by such acts, addressed to the senses, as would be likely to teach the doctrine of atonement in those times?

25. Is there any difference between the Old Testament and the New as to the doctrine of atonement? or is the difference on that subject between the two Testaments merely in regard to the modes of teaching this doctrine—the one being before, and the other after, the atonement for sin was made manifest to human senses?

26. Were “the Jews the first and most inveterate enemies of Christianity”? Or, is it not true that the entire Christian Church, as it is frequently called, was composed of Jews at a period about ten or twelve years after the crucifixion, when it must have amounted to many hundred thousands?

27. What is meant by the word *primitive*, as applied to the Church in the days of the apostles? Was the Church then primitive? That is, was it then new? Did the Church just then begin to exist? Or had it had an existence many hundred years before?

28. Is a Church any thing more or less than the external association of religious persons, according to the Scriptures, for the promotion of religion?

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

CATECHETICAL.

It is respectfully suggested that the following interrogatories, though of very great importance to the student of theology, do not by any means lie down in the labyrinths of deep criticism, but rather on or near the surface of religious teaching. Every man ought, therefore, to be able to give an answer to every question straight, square, categorical, and explicit.

1. Was the religion of Abel, and other pious antediluvians, any thing more or less, or any thing different from, *simple faith in the atoning merits of Christ*, however much or little they may have learned of an historic character, with regard to any visible, earthly exhibition Christ might be pleased to make of himself?

2. If any one shall conclude that true religion in these days was *in any thing* different from what it is now, let him, for his safety and satisfaction, note down specifically in what that difference consisted, and find the Scripture for it.

3. Can a man imagine any way in which purely religious ideas could be *originated* in the human mind other than by such external machinery as the Levitical ritual, since in the nature of things there could be no language to teach them?

Note.—The inculcation of ideas, by means of language,

is the mere communication from one to another of existing ideas. But I speak of their *origination* among a people who did not possess them, of such purely spiritual ideas as the being of God, his power, goodness, immaculate purity—sin, pardon, atonement, a Saviour, etc. Revelation was made in language; but if the ideas representing or corresponding to these words did not exist in the mind, then the words would reveal nothing. So some ideas must be originated before the revealed words could be intelligible.

4. Was there any thing—and what—in the rites commonly called the Jewish sacrifices, above, beyond, or different from such things as we can see were certainly or most probably necessary, or at least useful, for the origination and solid planting of religious ideas—Christian ideas—in the mind of a rude people, almost, or wholly, destitute of literature?

Note.—The *typical* character of such teachings is of course included in the above, because the teachings occurred *before* the advent of Christ.

5. Are “all the descendants of Jacob, from the earliest times, frequently called Jews by us at present”? Were the ten tribes who revolted under Jeroboam “commonly” called Jews in history? Were the Samaritans, their descendants—mixed blood—many generations afterward “commonly” called Jews? Were the “*myriads*” of Jews who believed in and were faithful to Christ—to use a single Scripture word denoting immense numbers, as held by all the critics—were they, after they were called Christians, ever called Jews, and are they “frequently so called by us at present”?

6. Is there any evidence in Scripture that the Church, in and about the time of John the Baptist, was more irreligious than at former periods, or than it was one thousand years afterward?

7. Is there any historical evidence going to show, or to

render it probable, that ever, at any one time, all the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Scribes combined, comprised over one in five hundred of the Jewish people?

8. Was John the Baptist's religion any thing more or less, or different from, simple Christianity, as we commonly understand it? And if different, in precisely what? Did he preach any "repentance" different from the simple repentance which all now preach? And did he baptize people into any thing else than the belief that Christ *had come*?

9. Is *Judaism* any thing more or less, or different from, the written religion now seen in the Old Testament Scriptures? If so, what is it, and wherein does it differ?

10. Is there any thing in all the written Old Testament Scriptures not now "profitable for doctrine," and useful and necessary to be truly taught and faithfully followed in religious duty? If so, which are the specific portions thus *unprofitable*?

11. Did not true, evangelical, divine religion exist, in both theory and practice, in the world, long before the coming of Christ? Or, if any one supposes it did not, let him write down, not in vague generalities, but specifically and precisely, in what the ante-Messianic religion differed from that in vogue since.

12. Did Christ our Saviour come into existence, or receive, or in any way take any more power as a Saviour, or any willingness to save sinners, or exhibit any new mode of saving sinners, at any chronological period along in the history of the world? Did any thing occur in, with, or about him, eighteen hundred years ago, that we know of, except the manifesting of himself to human senses, and such other things as were naturally concomitant therewith?

13. Did the Christians, or persons commonly rated as Christians, who taught false doctrine, insisting upon circum

cision, etc., as complained of by Paul in several places, and mentioned in Acts, teach *according* to the written Scriptures—the Old Testament—or *contrary* thereto? And did St. Paul, in contending against them, recommend a departure from, or a conformity to, the precise religion in whole, as written in the Old Testament?

14. Was circumcision the mode by which the sacrament of initiation was administered before the coming of Christ? And did not Christ himself administer the same sacrament by the use of water, and command us ever after to do so? Then supposing Christ to be a true teacher of the written religion of the Old Testament, does it not follow necessarily that, whatever particular characteristics that rite may have possessed, it was certainly and inherently confined by its own constitution to that period of the Church? Then, whether you consider the rite a type of Christ or not, was not its use in initiating persons into the Church after that time a violation of the Old Testament?

15. Is there any doctrine of religion written in the New Testament, and not written in the Old? If so, specify it in terms, and not in vague generalities.

16. Did Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, or anywhere else, teach any new rule of ethics not already written—though by no means so fully explained and enforced—in the Old Testament? If so, let it be specified in terms, and not in vague generalities.

17. Did St. Paul declare that, in all his teachings, he taught *nothing* but what he found already taught in the Old Testament?

18. Did the solidly pious, converted people, who understood the Scriptures aright, and who were grown to years of—say sixteen to twenty, before the birth of Christ, and who continued their practical piety and understanding of the Scriptures every day until—say twenty or thirty years

after the crucifixion—did such persons *change their religion*? And if so, from what faith, and to what faith did they change? Answer in terms, and not in vague generalities. And did their children after them—supposing them to have been pious—continue the same religion precisely, or take on another?

19. Was the religion promulgated by the apostles, “first begun to be promulgated by them?” or was it, substantially—though not so fully elaborated—previously promulgated? And if there was a difference, specify the difference in terms, and not in vague generalities.

20. Does the Old Testament teach, in any exclusive sense, of temporal blessings or rewards only, or of both temporal and eternal rewards and punishments? And, in this respect, is there any difference between the teachings of the Old Testament and the New? Or, are they, or do they, not both “have promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come”?

Note.—Collate the fifth and eighth verses of 1 Timothy iv., and it will show that the latter clause of the eighth grows out of the “word of God”—meaning the Old Testament, mentioned in the fifth verse. See, also, the same thing in more than two hundred places in the New Testament.

21. Is there any thing essentially religious in religious ceremonies? or are they not, on the contrary, in their nature, mere external modes or instruments of inculcating and enforcing religious truth and practice? And were there any ceremonies in common use in the Church before the coming of Christ, and not continued by the apostles, except such as were *typical* of the coming and death of Christ, and therefore, such as must necessarily cease on the coming of these events? If so, what ones?

22. Are there more or less religious ceremonies, numeri-

cally, in the Church now, than were commonly used in it in the period before the Advent?

23. Can a *law of God* be repealed? Does not the repeal of any law, by the authority which made it, necessarily imply some lack of wisdom in the enactment? Does not the repeal, if necessary at the time, necessarily suppose a lack of adaptation in it to presently existing circumstances? and therefore, would not a perfect Lawgiver have either given the law such conformity and applicability at the first, or have made it cease to be operative by its own inherent constitution? Does not the repeal of a law necessarily imply an after-thought?

24. Does a *perfect* law mean or imply any thing more or less than that it is so made that it never need be, and never can be, repealed or abrogated?

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

WHAT is the central idea or necessary foundation of Romanism, or Ritualism? It is that the *Church* is a society of men, organized with positive laws, and such and such forms and constituents of government, for the promotion and perpetuity of religion; which society, or brotherhood, was originally formed and set up in Jerusalem about eighteen hundred years ago, by the Saviour in person, or by his apostles.

Now, suppose this to be untrue, both historically and philosophically, without looking particularly into any peculiar tenets of Romanism, what becomes of popery and ritualism? No answer can be given than this, that they must suffer immediate and utter destruction.

I make this suggestion, and in this form, on the simple grounds of logic; and I repeat—suppose it to be true that there is no history, good or doubtful, in the New Testament or otherwise, attributable to that age, which gives any information of such a society being organized at that time, or indeed at any time; and then supposing again that it is philosophically demonstrable that the fraternity now existing, which we call *Church*, could not possibly have come about in that way, but that the nature of its vital and inherent constitution supposes and requires that it must have

grown into being in some other and essentially different way from that above supposed; then, I ask, in that case, what must become of the Romish hierarchy and of all superstitious tendencies in that direction?

The answer is apparent and cannot be doubtful.

But Romanism has another fulcrum besides the ecclesiasticism above. It rests not only upon the supposed organization of the *Church* by our Saviour, but supposes that he also then devised, introduced, and established a new and permanent *religion* for mankind. And its tenets and worship are claimed to be true upon the ground that they conform to and follow this new Church-model and these divinely-established modes of worship.

Now suppose all this to be untrue. Suppose that in fact the Saviour did not introduce, not only a new religious system, but suppose he did not introduce or teach a new religious doctrine of any kind, and not even a new precept in morals, but that he merely expounded, elaborated, and enforced authoritatively and divinely the doctrines and precepts of religion already revealed. Suppose this to be historically true; then, I ask, what must be the speedy fate of the errors of Romanism? Utter and speedy destruction, is the only answer that can be given.

And then suppose again, that the nature of religion, the character of God, the constitution of man, and the necessary relation between them to be such, that there *can be* but one religious faith—but one set of conditions of salvation for any and all people, before and after the human appearance of Christ. Suppose this to be true. Could Romanism survive the establishment of such a principle? Most assuredly it could not.

The *peculiarities* of Romanism, as they differ from what Protestants call Christianity, whether true or false, rest essentially and palpably on the supposition of a *new relig-*

ious establishment set up by the Saviour in the days of the apostles. And hence the question about the succession of Peter, and indeed all the other important questions between Romanists and Protestants.

But if Protestants would hold, square out, and both openly and plainly—as I think is most abundantly demonstrated in the foregoing dissertation—that there was, in no sense, nor in any shape, the establishment of either a *new Church* or *new religion* in the time of Christ, nor at any time, then the question about Peter falls to the ground wholly. And so fall, also, the other differences. There could be no such questions at all as those which do in fact separate between Romanists and Protestants.

Let us look a minute at a very few of these questions: One of them is, to “admit the Sacred Scriptures according to the sense which the holy mother Church has held and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Holy Scripture.”

Now if it should turn out that there is not, and never was, any such holy mother Church, in the legal sense here supposed, and with this judicial power, then this tenet dissolves, and the doctrine falls back into the supposition that members of the Church are fallible men, who have merely associated together for the common ends and purposes of religion.

But does not our literature admit, and have I not shown the admission in hundreds of places, that Christ, then and there, *made a new Church*, organized it, framed it, and so we call it *primitive*? And then, if so, was it not a holy Church? And having positive laws and a positive constitution, is it not the natural and legal mother of all successive Churches? You may call this institution a *Church*, or by any other name, if the body was thus divinely invested with the natural elements of government, viz., Legislative, Judicial, and Executive, was it not, and then is it hard to prove to

the satisfaction of many that it is not still, in its succession, the legal interpreter of the divine constitution?

Another Romish tenet is, "I profess also, that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord," etc.

But now, if it should turn out that in truth there is not, and never was, any *new law* at all, as is here meant, making seven sacraments, nor two sacraments, nor any other number of sacraments, then this tenet also is left without any support whatever.

And have I not shown, too, in the foregoing treatise, that this doctrine of *new sacraments*, made and geared into the Church at the period alluded to, is at least admitted by our current literature? Are we not then trying to cleanse the stream by working along down its current rather than by applying the purifying processes at the fountain?

Another tenet is, "that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation."

All this supposes not only a new mode of administering a sacrament, which is really the thing, and the only important or vital truth taught on that subject by Christ, but it supposes *new sacraments*, which can only mean or suppose a new religion. And I suggest the inquiry, as not unworthy of consideration—how far our own admissions have formed the only ground upon which this tenet of Romanism rests?

Mr. R. J. Wilberforce says: "Let us go back to the time when the Church existed in its embryo form in the college of the apostles." Grant him that in the time of the apostles the Church existed in an *embryo form*, and you give him a position in which he may be able to stand, but which is given him at the expense of at least historic truth. Look at the Church as it *was* and *is*, and the supremacy of an

apostle cannot be supposed; transubstantiation cannot be supposed; Church infallibility cannot be supposed; neither can auricular confession, the "new law," nor popish Church authority, for they all rest upon the idea of a legal ecclesiasticism.

Romanism is ecclesiasticism, and ecclesiasticism is Romanism in essence and in meaning. Let this doctrine of a "primitive Church," and of the "introduction of Christianity" into it be conceded, and I will not say that all these errors of popery will necessarily follow, but I will say they are likely to follow, and that they cannot possibly stand without them. And I will farther say, that they *did* grow out of them, at least to a very considerable extent, primarily. They are but the natural offshoots of an ambitious Church, of low piety, which supposes itself to have originated in the unnatural and untruthful manner combated in the foregoing treatise.

What, then, is the general mode of warfare put forth by many of our writers in their attacks upon the superstitions of Romanism? They strike at the branches while the root remains vigorous and untouched. Acknowledging its great premise, we deny and object to some of its plausible, if not reasonable, conclusions. If we—many of us—do not teach openly and expressly that the Church we call Christian, and the religion we call Christianity, were brought newly and for the first time into being by our Lord Jesus Christ, about eighteen hundred years ago, we so explain, or fail to explain, as to leave that easily, if not necessarily, to be inferred.

The above arguments will lie with equal force against all forms of High-Church doctrines, whether such doctrines relate to the existence of the Church, the powers and functions of the ministry, or to the rules of religion. Nay, a little more than this. Where is the Church division, the religious controversy, the schism, the party strife and con-

tention, which does not grow directly or indirectly out of the false doctrines of an "original Church" in the time of the apostles, and a Christian religion "suited to all mankind," which I have endeavored to combat and expose in the foregoing chapters?

When, may I not ask, are we to get clear of Romanism? We have met it with much ability and some success in the higher walks of theological polemics; but is it less dangerous in its commonplaceness? Is it in its classics only to be combated, while its Primers and First Readers are to remain in the hands of the children and the masses?

Does not at least some of our literature need expurgation? And if the standard books need it, what of the more numerous, and perhaps more useful, or at least more popular, works of second-rate type?

Look at one of the very first classics of the age, or of any age, standing at the head of the list. *Butler's Analogy* is hampered no little in this way. All the way through there is explicitly recognized two distinct and different religions—the one "established" by the Saviour in the time of the apostles, and the other long previously. And if the very learned author were asked which one of these religions he advocated, the book answers immediately: The Christian. And then suppose he were asked, What of "the Jewish religion" which existed previously to "the establishment of Christianity?" What relation does it bear to mankind? and where is traceable the analogy of that religion to the constitution and course of nature?

I do not hesitate to believe there is not found in the *Analogy* a smooth and satisfactory answer to that question. And, for my part, I confess I do not feel any great interest in the vindication of a "Christianity" which is a special religion. Christianity pertains to revelation, wholly, solidly.

And then, remembering that in arguments in support of religion, we are addressing men supposed to be more or less skeptical, an intelligent man proceeds only as he is driven by force of logical argumentation, finds himself embarrassed. Here, he is taught, are two revealed "religions," differing widely from each other. He does not understand it. The theologian may understand it, or rather content himself with not understanding it, after this manner: "They are the same religion virtually—the one grows out of the other; the one is the bud and the other the fruit; the one was preparatory, and the other complete; the one was temporary, and the other final; the one was a type of the other; the one was calculated for a particular race of people, and the other for all mankind."

These explanations, besides being contradictory and embarrassing, are far from being satisfactory to the reader who has a hundred times seen "the Jewish religion" denounced, sometimes as "a system of folly and delusion," and sometimes something worse. He has a hundred times seen the "two religions" placed not only in contrast, but in hostility to each other. He has often been told, in many forms of expression, that the "old religion" was utterly repudiated by the Saviour and the apostles; that the Jews were urged to abandon it. He has seen the Jews anathematized wholesale, because they still clung to "the faith of their fathers," and has seen the Gentiles brought in to occupy their place and enjoy the "new religion;" and he is not therefore well prepared to understand or to favor the doctrine of oneness, or sameness, in these two antagonistic religions. By his own reflections he could see that there *could be* but one religion for mankind, though he might see that in different ages and different circumstances of mankind there might be very different modes of teaching it.

If you were to tell him plainly from the beginning, and

throughout, that there is now and was always one, and but one, revealed religion—that it always had the same object—the same end—was for all mankind; that God, being infinitely wise and benevolent, religion was analogous to the constitution and course of nature, that would be at least consistent, and he could understand it. And such arguments being *true* as well as logically consistent, he might be influenced by them.

But Bishop Butler tells him that, “The establishment of the Jewish and Christian religions, which were events contemporary with the miracles related to be wrought in attestation of both, or subsequent to them, these events are just what we should have expected, upon supposition such miracles were really wrought to attest the truth of those religions.”

This means that the establishment of the Jewish religion was an historic event, and the truthfulness of the system was attested by appropriate miracles; and that at a subsequent period another and different religion was established, and its truthfulness was also attested by appropriate miracles.

But when the New Testament is put into the hands of the inquirer, he does not there see any miracles wrought to attest *a religion*—a system of doctrines and morals; all the miracles he sees were professedly in attestation of one single, simple fact, viz., that *the man Jesus* was *the Christ*; not, however, by any means, the Christ of a new religion, but of the *Jewish religion*, as the Bishop calls it. And so he neither understands what the Bishop means by “religions”—several religions—nor what new religion it is that he calls “Christianity.” As a matter of fact, he sees that all the religion of all revelation, Old and New, is Christianity. By *Christianity* I mean what I suppose everybody means—a religion which has Christ for its substance and vitality.

Again, the Bishop teaches that, “The fact is allowed that

Christianity obtained, *i. e.*, was professed to be received in the world upon the belief of miracles, immediately in the age in which it is said these miracles were wrought."

But when the inquirer turns to the history of the times, he is hardly able to understand the Bishop, because he sees no such separate system of religion as he calls "Christianity." He sees persons formerly called Jews, now called Christians, tenaciously adhering to the precise faith of the old prophets. He sees Paul and others commending and endorsing the faith of Abraham, of Noah, and even of Abel. And so he needs explanations which he certainly would not need if he had been told plainly, from the beginning, that there never had been but one Church and one religion, and that the "religions" of Bishop Butler was a mistake.

It seems to me that if writers would confine themselves to the truth of history as well indeed as to the truth of religion, and rate Christianity as strictly identical with what they call the Jewish religion, teach one religion from the beginning, that their arguments in its favor would appear more reasonable, natural, consistent, and more in keeping with the character of God, as they represent his attributes. It is a hard thing to prove satisfactorily, to a man of close reasoning, more or less inclined to skepticism, the establishment of a new religion, a Christianity highly antagonistic to a religion which was once true, and which now is oftentimes pronounced both true and false. The thing lacks that smooth naturalness which men look for.

Paley tells us in so many words, that the Saviour "changed the religion of the world," for that before that time the religion known to men was "a system of folly and delusion." And Butler inculcates the same doctrine in a hundred places, in various forms of expression. There were two "religions," the "old" and the "new;" and the former must needs be set aside, that the latter might be inculcated.

Now, with such teachings from such men, and with their lessons followed by hundreds of lesser writers, who consider it semi-sacrilege to question their teachings, how are we to approach men skeptically inclined? And in the very same books too, where "the Jewish religion" is in a hundred places condemned in the strongest terms, it is also in a hundred places commended in the strongest terms.

Do these things require no explanation? Men already convinced might be satisfied, and indeed they are satisfied, with a tangled-up explanation about "dispensations," and by giving some great and very mystical meaning to the word "typical," which can be made to explain almost any thing; but men not already convinced, are not so easily satisfied.

I know of no way, under such circumstances, to approach a skeptic but to tell him these men are radically mistaken, or misrepresent themselves. I tell him that it is palpable that "religions" are not known to revelation; that Scripture recognizes one, and but one, straightforward system of religion from first to last; that what some men call different *religions* is only different *modes of teaching* the same religion in different ages and different circumstances. And secondly, I open the New Testament wide before him to show that the Saviour and the apostles did not *change* the religion, or any religion. They only instructed men in their own old religion, endeavoring to get them to understand and cling the more closely to *it*. They changed religion then just as all ministers do now. As far as they could they induced men to lay aside any false, ignorant, and erroneous notions they might have imbibed through the mis-teachings of others or otherwise.

When St. Paul tells us he received the gospel not from men, but from Christ, I do not understand him to mean that he received thus a system of religion, or some religious doc-

trines. Surely not. I understand him to mean that he thus received evidence of one single fact, viz., that the man *Jesus was Christ*.

We are frequently told that miracles were wrought "in attestation of Christianity," or the Christian religion. By this the reader, ninety-nine cases in a hundred, understands that these miracles prove the truth and verity of a new system of religion known by the general name of Christianity; whereas, the Christian miracles were made to attest, not religious doctrines, but a fact in religion, vital to its truth, viz., that *Jesus was Christ*. It is difficult, if not impossible, to see how miracles can attest or prove the truth of abstract doctrines. At the period in question nothing needed attestation but the fact of the indwelling Messiahship in the person of *Jesus*.

Some of the Scripture miracles were wrought by the hands of Moses, and some by Paul, and others. Those in Old Testament times attest, not doctrines, but facts, and these facts support the truths of the doctrines taught by didactic teachers. They endorsed the teachers.

Doctrines are abstract propositions. It is a doctrine that there is but one God—that God is good—that he will hear prayer, and answer it—that he will forgive sins in certain circumstances, etc. Miracles are physical, or they present physical phenomena to the observation. By them a man might prove himself a true teacher, and so attest his teachings to be true. This is their office. Messiah endorsed Moses, Noah, Abraham, Elijah, etc., as true teachers, and these teachers taught the doctrines of religion known to revelation.

But when Christ appeared in the person of *Jesus*, then the truth of this great fact needed attestation. And I can conceive of no other way in which this *could* be done but by miracles. I can conceive that Christ might have come, and might have appeared in a different form and manner

from what he did, but I can conceive of nothing but miracle of some sort that could bring the visible aspects of the atonement of the Saviour in contact with the mind.

But when told that miracles attested the truth of Christianity—meaning thereby a system of religious doctrines making up in the aggregate a body of divinity, or code of theology—I am told that which I cannot understand. And so I conclude that a vast amount of the arguments, attempting, in this way, to establish the true religious theory, strike intelligent minds, inclined to disbelief, very obliquely, having by the very awkwardness of their attitude lost much of their force.

We are often told how Christianity was “established,” or “propagated,” “at the very first.” By such expressions the reader understands that the system of religion we call Christianity was “first established” in the days of Jesus; whereas, the only thing first established on this subject, in that period, was the simple fact that the man Jesus was the Christ of religion. Beyond that all that was needful to be done was to elaborate the old doctrines authoritatively, and inculcate obedience to them.

The teachings objected to in the foregoing treatise do also a great disservice to Christianity, in my judgment, in that they present modern Judaism in an unfair and untrue point of light. We owe it to truth, to fair dealing with Jews of the present day, and to ourselves, to present this subject in a fair and intelligible light before the world. The relation between the religion of modern Jews and Christianity is, it seems to me, easily seen, and not difficult of rational and intelligible description.

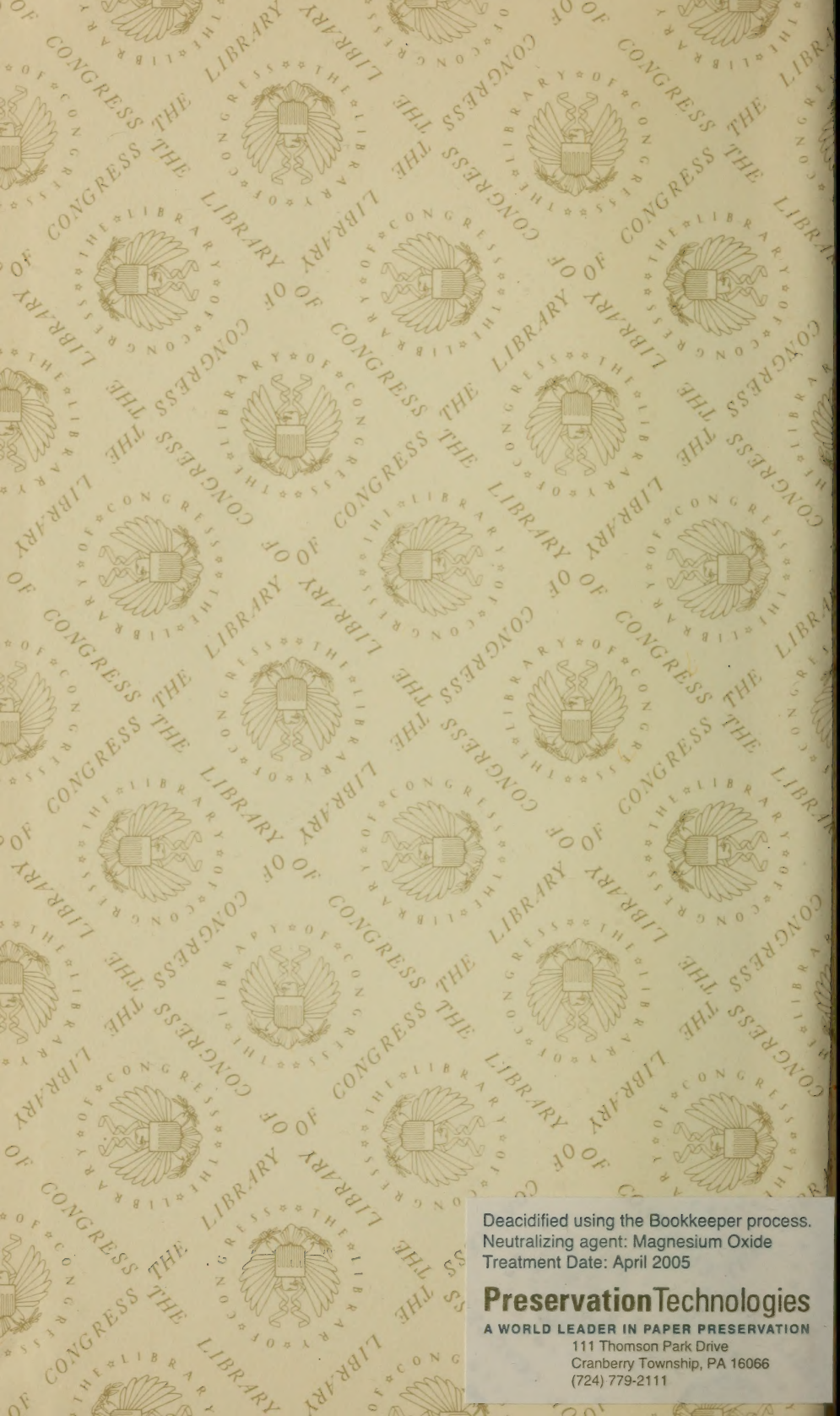
The way we have it now, for the most part, as the subject actually exists in the popular mind, is, that the Jews around us *retain and still profess* the religion of “the old dispensation.” *Then Christianity is a heresy.* That result is as

necessary as that twice two are equal to four. The popular mind has it that the Jews, in the time of the apostles, would not change their religion and become Christians! The proposition is both untrue and preposterous. And the writers tell us—a few scores being quoted in the foregoing treatise—that *they continue* their ancient faith. And so the ungraceful logic runs, that their religion covers a *large part* of Christianity, and it only requires a recognition of Christ to complete it!

We ought to treat modern Jews better than that. We owe it to them as well as to ourselves, to have it understood with them, that upon supposition that Jesus was Christ, their religion is not only wholly false, but wholly a departure from all and every part of the religion known to the Old Testament. And, secondly, that whether Jesus was or was not the Christ, their present religion is entirely new as to the Old Testament religion, for that whereas the latter suspends salvation wholly upon faith in an atoning sacrifice, theirs bases it upon personal, external actions.

The baseless and self-destructive myth about the national "*restoration*" of these few fragments of what was, more than three thousand years ago, a Jewish people, ought not much longer to ignore the plain history of the Bible, and disgrace the religious literature of the day.

I may be told that the authors cited—in at least most instances—teach the doctrine of *one Church* and *one religion*. I know they do. Sometimes some of them teach it with considerable plainness, but generally, with many writers, in a *quasi*, indefinite, or inconclusive manner. *But they also teach the doctrines I attribute to them.* It has not been my purpose, by any means, to review generally the writers I quote from; if so, I should have a very different task to perform. I have only been pointing out some of their defects.



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